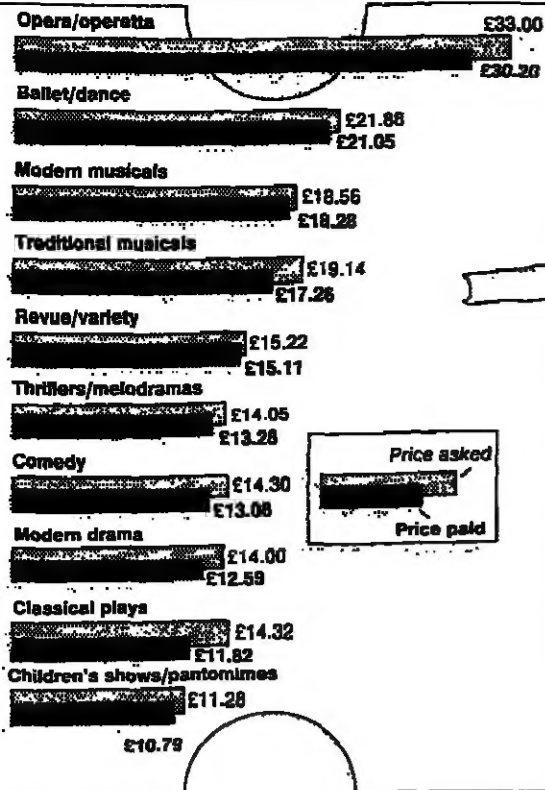


THE AVERAGE COST OF A TICKET 1991



Theatre tills jingling to the sound of music

Musicals are beginning to dominate the West End stage, limiting opportunity for comedy and drama and pushing up ticket prices, Simon Tait reports

THE price of West End theatre tickets went up by 11 per cent last year — twice the rate of inflation — to an average of £17.45.

Figures for 1991 collated by the Society of West End Theatre are still being analysed, but the increasing popularity of musicals appears to be forcing prices up. There are more musicals in the 50 theatres than ever before, biting into the scope for drama and comedy.

The success of Lloyd Webber and MacIntosh extravaganzas, with lavish sets and technology, has raised public expectations for all shows — and the costs. Cameron Mackintosh spent £3.5 million to stage *Miss Saigon*, and £1.2 million on his latest musical, *Moby Dick*. But even the smallest straight play will cost at least £120,000. To break even, any show must have 60 per

cent audiences over a run of about 20 weeks, and last year the average capacity in the West End was 66 per cent.

Howard Panter, producer of *Carmen Jones*, one of the year's successes, said: "There is enormous popular appeal for musicals and a producer has to get a return for his investors." His was the first non-opera to demand a top price of £30 when it opened at the Old Vic last spring, and it is booked to June. He said: "We have to demand this sort of price to get our money back and to encourage people to risk their money."

West End attendances last year were down on 1991, but only from 11.3 million to 10.9 million. This represents a remarkable recovery in a year which started disastrously. In one week in February, attendances were down by 27 per cent.

There was no discernible resistance to price rises. The influences were the Gulf war, which kept American tourists away, the February blizzards and rising unemployment and recession. Producers put prices up as damage limitation, and then were hit by the new VAT rates. They kept them back from the public for six weeks or so, but in mid-May prices rose and there was an immediate 11 per cent dip in attendances. In the last three

months of the year the losses were almost clawed back, and those good houses appear to have carried into this year. And 1990, after all, was an all-time record year.

Of the shows on offer this week, there is one dance, one revue, two operas, two thrillers, six comedies, six straight plays and 21 musicals. For the first time last year, more than half the West End's shows, 51 per cent, were musicals. More than five million people saw them, 20 per cent more than in 1990.

Returns from modern drama have fallen consistently over the past three years from £24 million in 1989 to £16 million in 1990 and £13 million last year. Likewise, comedy returns were £17 million in 1989, £15 million in 1990 and just under £10 million last year. The reason is not necessarily that the public has gone off

new plays or comedy, but that producers are not taking them on or they are not being written.

Last year the producer Bill Kenwright experimented with ticket prices of £5 and £10 for *Ibsen's Brand*, and it was disastrous. He tried it again for the eight weeks of *Good Rockin' Tonight* at the Strand Theatre, which ended its run there last week with 100 per cent houses and no profit. He said: "I did a survey among the audience and found that 97 per cent of people were not aware of the ticket prices. Ticket agencies and party bookers were not interested in low prices because there was no margin for them."

Pirate agencies, marking up prices for bad seats, have been a West End bane. But the government is planning to cut them out by insisting on face value being shown and the seat's position.

Then there is the rent of the theatre, which independent producers such as Thelma Holt believe is too high. Owners also charge producers "contras", the costs of running the house, which can include such expenses as £70 a week for foyer flowers. But owners can be supportive, too. When *Return to the Forbidden Planet* opened at the Cambridge in 1989, Roger Filer, chief executive of Stoll Moss Theatre, gave the producer, Andrzej Ptaszynski several weeks' rent free to give the show a chance to take off.

Producers are constantly searching for new audiences, or new permutations of the available audience, by experimenting with show times. The most promising seems to be Sunday opening, which the Society of West End Theatre hopes to get the unions to make new agreements on.

Literature studies 'being edged out'

BY MATTHEW D'ANCONA, EDUCATION REPORTER

ENGLISH literature is being edged out of the classroom and teenagers' reading experience limited by timetable pressures caused by the national curriculum, according to a report by classroom advisers.

The demands of the curriculum were already reducing the time available to teach literature to pupils in "Key Stages" 3 and 4, in the 11 to 16 age group, said the survey, which was based on information supplied by 12 local education authorities. Many teachers complained that English literature was too often being treated as an option and the time allotted to English generally had dwindled.

All children are required by the national curriculum to sit mathematics, English and science at GCSE, and from 1994 will also have to study technology, a foreign language and history or geography. Critics have said that

this compulsory core of subjects will greatly restrict flexibility in the standard 40-period weekly timetable.

The new GCSE/Key Stage 4 syllabus, due in draft form this spring, will require English candidates to have some knowledge of Shakespeare and pre-20th century literature. To read more widely, they will have to take English literature as a separate optional subject.

The National Association of Advisers in English, the professional group of English advisers working in local authorities which compiled the report, fears that the literary horizons of teenagers will be narrowed and is concerned that fewer will read books from other cultures or those written before 1900. Richard Andersen, the association's secretary, said: "Every child has a right to have access to English literature and, while there is some provision for

this in the GCSE courses that are currently operating, that right is going to be whittled away if timetable pressure is maintained."

Richard Knott, assistant chief executive of the National Curriculum Council, said that literature was not being marginalised. "Literature is a central part of English and it is in the national curriculum, as it should be. Increased flexibility at Key Stage 4 gives space for subjects like English literature."

The number of pupils taking English literature GCSE rose by almost 4.8 per cent last year while entries in maths fell by 5.9 per cent. But Dudley Newell, English adviser in Manchester, said that the new realities of time-tableing would mean that fewer pupils left school with a basic literary grounding.

"If you want to extend and deepen kids' understanding of literature you have to do it as a separate subject," he said. "Everyone will study some literature from now on but there will be less of a foundation for A-level."

The survey is likely to increase concern that the English literary tradition is in jeopardy and that many children will leave school without having read such standard authors as Dickens, Austen and George Eliot. However, Patrick Farrinder, chairman of the Council for University English, said it was more important that pupils acquired a general knowledge of books. "Pupil-teacher ratios in primary and secondary schools were worse last year than in 1990. Pupil numbers increased by 46,100 while the number of teachers fell by 3,600, according to annual returns made to the education department."

Pupils per teacher in primary schools last year was 22.2 compared with 22.0 in 1990. In secondary schools, the figure rose from 15.25 to 15.55. Stephen Byers, of the Council of Education Authorities, said local authorities were worried about what would happen this year.

Education Times
L&T section, page 7



Clown prints: Mr Jam catching up with his reading during a break from the European Clowns Convention at Bognor Regis, West Sussex, yesterday, which included workshops on circus skills

Cities wake up to Hollywood option

BY DOUGLAS BROOM

TOWNS and cities that have failed to attract a Japanese car plant or a microchip factory are being urged to turn to Hollywood as a source of economic development.

The British Film Commission, the government-funded body set up to attract filmmakers to Britain, is urging local authorities to establish special offices to help producers and directors to find locations in their areas.

Unlike most other sources of investment, the film industry is likely to regard urban dereliction as a positive asset and rows of tumbledown houses are more likely to woo the film moguls than steel and glass offices.

Liverpool, which was the first city to set up its own film office, claims to have brought in £4.5 million in the last three years by attracting filmmakers to the city. Paul Mingard, who runs the office, said that film companies not only brought goods and services in the area but also provided employment for technicians and film extras.

Birmingham and Louthan regional council, Edinburgh, has also established film offices and other local authorities are being urged to follow. Since the Lumiere brothers first brought their moving film camera to Liverpool in 1896, to make a film called *Liverpool Scenes*, the film industry seems to have been unable to leave the city alone.

Up to the end of last year 44 feature films and 60 television productions have been set there, ranging from *Letter to Brezhnev*, a film about a Liverpool girl who falls in love with a Russian seaman, to *The Hunt for Red October*, in which the city centre was transformed into Moscow. Alan Bleasdale's *GBH*, the television political thriller which many regarded as a parable about the influence of the hard left in Liverpool, was partly filmed in the city. As scenes were being shot in bedrooms at the Adelphi Hotel, Dr Mingard and local government minister Michael Portillo were addressing a seminar in the same hotel about the benefits of film investment.

Turning a city into a film lot can have its hazards, however, as Dr Mingard discovered in January last year when part of Stanley Street in Bootle was blown up as part of a blitz scene for a film about the life of Derek Bentley, who was hanged for his part in the murder of a policeman in 1952. The explosions were set off on the day before the Gulf War broke out, prompting one passer-by to assume that Saddam Hussein had launched a preemptive strike on Merseyside. In the resulting confusion, police, the fire brigade and army bomb disposal officers were called out.

Attaché rejects Falklands allegations

A former British defence attaché in Argentina has hit back after new allegations that the British embassy in Buenos Aires failed to warn London of an imminent invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982 (Michael Evans writes).

Colonel Stephen Love, defence attaché in Buenos Aires from 1979 to 1982, told *The Times* that it was "totally unjustified" to blame the embassy and its ambassador, the late Sir Anthony Williams.

The 60-year-old colonel spoke out after the screening of a television documentary marking the 10th anniversary of the Argentine invasion on April 2, 1982.

Col Love wrote a report detailing his fears of an Argentine invasion on March 2, 1982. But he said the head of the intelligence staff at the defence ministry did not receive a copy until more than a month after the invasion.

Falklands facts
L&T section, page 4

Jews campaign

Liberal Jews today launch a campaign to correct public ignorance about the movement's practices and beliefs. Liberal Judaism, which celebrates its 90th anniversary in Britain this year, has suffered almost a century of ignorance and lack of recognition by mainstream Jewish and non-Jews, campaign leaders say. Rabbi Helen Freeman, of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in St John's Wood, northwest London, estimated that 10,000 UK Jews are from the Liberal tradition.

Punch 'for sale'

The future of *Punch*, the 150-year-old humorous magazine, is in doubt after reports that it will close unless a buyer is found. David Thomas, editor, said he did not know if the reports were true. The magazine's circulation has fallen from 175,000 in the 1940s to 33,000 last year and it is reported to lose £1.5 million a year. United Newspapers, the owners, is said to be negotiating with an Anglo-American publishing house interested in buying the title.

Hurd support

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, has backed a plan to safeguard the future of dilapidated Haveringham Hall in Suffolk. He has written to a local protest group expressing support for its scheme to transfer ownership of the Georgian mansion from the United Bank of Kuwait to the National Trust. Mr Hurd is the first senior government member to lend his weight to the proposal.

Lead-free hope

Sales of unleaded petrol are expected to account for half of petrol sales in Britain later this year. From virtually nothing in 1988, lead-free had risen to 43 per cent of sales by last November, according to the environment department's annual digest of statistics. Passing the halfway mark this year may partly depend on the level of activity in the new car market, department sources said.

Britain shakes off the flu shivers

The doctors' warning bark has proved worse than the bite of the A-Beijing virus. Nigel Hawkes finds out why

What became of the flu epidemic? At risk of offending anyone who has suffered the aches of flu this winter, doctors now declare that the oft-predicted epidemic never took place.

The A-Beijing virus, which the World Health Organisation said might cut a swathe through Europe, established only a foothold in Britain. At the height of the outbreak, in the week ending January 5, there were 24 sufferers per 100,000 people, less than a quarter of the level defined as epidemic. Yet, the United States, France and Norway had A-Beijing epidemics, according to the Influenza Monitoring and Information Bureau. How did we escape?

"Predicting flu epidemics is always crystal-ball gazing," John Oxford, a virologist at the London Hospital Medical College, said. "The virus is very unpredictable, so it's easy to come a cropper. There had been a big outbreak in the US, and when we began to get cases here, it was fair enough to err on the side of caution and say that we might have an epidemic. People encouraged to have the flu jab lost nothing, and it may give them a little protection next winter."

The bureau, supported by

vaccine manufacturers, was among those warning of an epidemic. Richard Kenyon, of the bureau, is unrepentant, saying: "Why did it not take hold? It's impossible to say. Certainly we can't claim that the vaccine was responsible for preventing the epidemic, because too few people had it. We believe that about 4.5 million people were vaccinated, most of them in the high-risk groups of the old and chronic sick, and that's too few to have any real effect. In any case, the object of the jabs is to save lives among vulnerable groups, not stop epidemics."

Professor Oxford suggests resistance from past exposure to A-Beijing, the virus's unpredictability, and sociological considerations, such as the degree to which people congregate, as factors.

Britain had quite a lot of cases of flu, and of flu-like illness, this winter, according to John Skehel, of the National Institute of Medical Research, but no signs of epidemic, in the form of excess death rates.

"You can't predict when flu is going to come, what virus it's going to be, and what impact it's going to have," Dr Skehel said.

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Heritage gives church £5m

BY RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

GRANTS worth £5.4 million are to be given by English Heritage for the repair and conservation of cathedrals. The funding, to be given over the next three years, will be announced Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, English Heritage chairman, today.

The government allocated £11.5 million to English Heritage for cathedral repairs in April 1991. The first phase, £2 million in grants, was offered last October. Of the funding to be announced today, £4 million forms the second phase for cathedral repairs and the remaining £1.4 million is promised to some cathedrals for projects up to 1995.

The largest beneficiaries are Salisbury, which receives £870,000 over three years, and Ely, given £690,000 over two years. The largest individual grant for this year is £500,000, to Liverpool Roman Catholic cathedral. Lord Montagu said: "I am delighted that we are also able to make commitments for future years, thus providing continuity and enabling cathedral authorities to put longer-term work in hand with some confidence."

Applications were made for work costing £16 million, not all eligible for support from English Heritage. Of 39 applications, 33 were successful and three are still being considered.

Grants were made for archiving projects at 14 cathedrals. The 1991 Cathedral Survey Fabric Commission showed that few had an up-to-date set of architectural drawings readily available. Other cathedrals will receive grants for fire protection and masonry cleaning.

CATHEDRAL GRANTS			
	1992-3 £	1993-4 £	1994-5 £
Birmingham	42,000		
Blackburn	80,000		
Blackpool	100,000	36,000	36,000
Bristol	15,000		
Carlisle	115,000	60,000	60,000
Chesham	15,000	10,000	8,000
Durham	101,000	66,000	66,000
Ely	345,000	345,000	
Gloucester	151,000	100,000	
Hereford	75,000		
Leicester	18,000		
Lichfield	337,000		
Lincoln	140,000	40,000	
Liverpool RC	600,000		
Manchester	2,000		
Northampton RC	22,250		
Peterborough	40,000		
Plymouth RC	50,000	45,000	
Portsmouth RC	85,000		
Ripon	25,000		
Rochester	140,000		
Salisbury	85,000		
St Albans	100,000		
St Pauls	142,500		
Southwell	450,000	330,000	90,000
Wells	60,000		
Worcester	18,000	13,000	
Wrexham	10,000		
Winchester	162,000		
Worcester	150,000	35,000	
York	163,000	140,000	
Total	3,814,750	1,222,000	258,000

Source: English Heritage

Corner shop finds the going tougher

BY LOUISE HIDALGO

SMALL high street stores and the corner shop are being squeezed more than ever, with a greater share of money finding its way into the tills of the big ten, headed by Sainsbury and Tesco, a report published today says.

The top ten retailers accounted for more than a third of all the money spent on retail goods last year, up two per cent on the previous year and five per cent compared with five years ago. Britain's estimated 240,000 small independent retailers were left to struggle to win some of the 30 per cent of sales which were not concentrated in the hands of the 500 largest stores and chains.

A concentration of money spent in shops in the hands of the few has been a feature of British retailing in recent years. Last year there was the sharpest rise in their share of sales since the mid-Eighties, according to Corporate Intelligence, the retail research company which produced the report. Almost all the increase came from stores outside the top 500.

Sainsbury kept its position as the largest retail chain, the

See Front Page

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Camper van searched at Dover

Customs seize £7.5m heroin after stopping couple and children

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THREE young boys returned to Belgium last night after a couple were caught allegedly attempting to smuggle heroin with a street value of £7.5 million into Britain.

Customs officers seized the 65 kilos of heroin when they searched a camper van after the couple and the children had arrived at Dover on a ferry from the Belgian port of Ostend. After discovering the haul, Customs and Excise detained the Belgian couple, who had been driving the van, and took charge of the children aged six, ten and 12. The boys, children of the woman detained, were

passed to Kent social services department, which looked after them until their father collected them yesterday and took them back to Belgium.

The drugs, the largest haul this year, were discovered by one of the customs Flexible Anti-Smuggling Teams (Fast), which move between ports of entry.

The couple, both aged 35, were arrested and charged on Saturday in connection with the discovery. They will appear before Dover magistrates today.

The Dover seizure was the second big find of heroin in three weeks, and brings to

105 kilos the total seized by customs officers in that period. Forty kilos of that was seized at Harwich last month, when customs officers searched an empty coach arriving from The Netherlands to take some Dutch visitors home. A total of 115 kilos of heroin has been discovered this year. Last year, 358 kilos was found.

Customs officials believe that a large proportion of the heroin that they have seized this year comes from an area of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan that is known as the Golden Crescent. They believe that it is smuggled to Turkey, where it is often refined before being smuggled through the Balkans and across Europe to the Channel ports.

The seizures confirm the suspicion among customs officers that countries such as Belgium and The Netherlands are already becoming warehouses for drugs aimed at the British market. They will also fuel fears among customs officers at the increased potential for drugs trafficking once barriers to trade within EC countries come down next January. Just over 60 per cent of seizures by weight were smuggled in from EC countries last year.

It is unusual, though not unknown, for drug smugglers to be accompanied by children. This is part of attempts to convince customs officers that they are ordinary travellers, but the number of children who have to be looked after by social services following the arrest of adults for drug smuggling is not large.

A much bigger difficulty facing social services departments at ports is that of unaccompanied children who arrive seeking asylum.

In West Sussex, 12 children are being looked after by social services after arriving at Gatwick airport seeking asylum. The London borough of Hillingdon is looking after 35 children, aged between nine and 17, including 25 from Eritrea, four from Uganda, three Ethiopians and three Angolans. Fifteen of the Eritreans are in a community home opened to house them, eight are in other residential homes and the other two are in foster care.

Drug dealers use Red Star service

DRUG traffickers are using British Rail's Red Star parcel service network and other parcel and courier services to transport drugs, according to police and Customs investigators. The parcel systems are also used for sending money to drug distributors or money launderers, it is thought.

The dangers presented by the parcel networks is highlighted in the latest edition of a special magazine on drug world trends and developments produced by Britain's national drugs intelligence unit. The magazine is circulated to drugs squads in Britain, Customs posts and drug investigators abroad.

Investigators believe the parcel networks have been used for transporting cocaine, amphetamines and cannabis in small but profitable consignments. There is speculation that some businessmen may be prepared to allow their regular shipments to be used as a cover.

British Transport Police have found four drug consignments in the Red Star network in the past year. Several consignments of cash worth £2,000 to £3,000 each have also been seized.

For the highly competitive drugs trade, the parcel network offers quick deliveries which can be picked up without attracting attention. They may also be used for

Stewart Tandler discovers that heroin and cocaine are being delivered through quick parcel networks

International consignments. Risks are few because little proof of identity is needed.

Red Star requires a description of the goods being carried and it and other parcel firms search cargo. But with thousands of items being transported within Britain each day, checks are difficult to make because of time pressures. Red Star deals with 25,000 items per day from more than 300 stations. The company said: "We are aware we have been used by drug traffickers, but we cannot check every parcel."

Police have used sniffer dogs to check parcels and efforts are also being made to build up intelligence on how to detect consignments. Detective Chief Superintendent Anthony White, assistant co-ordinator of the national drug unit, said the amount of drugs passed through commercial parcel networks was thought to be small. But he added: "We are vigilant and the British Transport Police and Customs are constantly seeking to improve detection."

Yorks take a family outing

BY ALAN HAMILTON

THE Duke and Duchess of York, accompanied by their two children, went out together as a family yesterday in spite of continuing legal discussions about their proposed separation.

They called at Windsor Castle to pick up birthday presents for Princess Eugenie, the couple's youngest daughter who celebrates her second birthday today, including some from the Queen and the Princess of Wales, who called at the castle earlier. When the Duke and Duchess returned with the children shortly after six o'clock their car was full of boxes. A rumoured birthday party at Sunninghill Park yesterday failed to materialise.

Meanwhile the saga of the Duke and Duchess of York's failed marriage continued to elbow aside election coverage in some sections of the press over the weekend. The *News of the World* reported that, in spite of their planned separation, the couple had fulfilled a long-standing engagement

on Saturday night by attending a party given by Elton John, the singer and a prominent member of the so-called "Fergie set".

An opinion poll conducted by Gallup for *The Sunday Telegraph* claimed to show six times as much public sympathy for the duchess as for the duke, with by far the largest degree of sympathy going to the Queen. More than half of those questioned thought that members of the Royal Family should set an example by their behaviour, and that the Yorks' marriage breakdown would harm the monarchy. More than three quarters wished to see the monarchy survive.

Hitherto unpublished extracts from an interview the duchess gave to *Tatler* magazine last year were reproduced in *The Sunday Times*. Defending her frequent skiing holidays, the duchess spoke of her need to escape the strictures of royal life.

"I just wanted to get away. To get away from the system

and people saying no you can't, no you can't, no you can't. That's what the system is. The way I get away is by going to the mountains. If I lived in Europe no one would be the wiser. I could go skiing for the weekend and no one would bat an eyelid." The duchess complained that she was never allowed privacy.

Andrew Morton, one of the journalists who broke the story in the *Daily Mail*, yesterday denied reports circulating last week that the duchess had employed a public relations adviser to feed her side of the story to the press, or that she herself had been the source of the leak.

A gradually assembling jigsaw had been completed when normal journalistic enquiry established that lawyers had spent much of last weekend at the couple's home at Sunninghill Park working out the details of a separation.

Earl Spencer, father of the Princess of Wales, was admitted to hospital for tests, suffering from "mild pneumonia".

Japanese seal County Hall sale

BY RACHEL KELLY

THE long-running saga of London's County Hall ends today with its sale to a Japanese property company. Shirayama Corporation plans to convert the neo-classical building on the south bank of the Thames into a hotel, conference centre and flats.

The £200 million deal follows the failure of a £100 million bid ten days ago by the London School of Economics, which wished to move into the building.

The London Residuary Body (LRB), set up to dispose of the assets of the Greater London Council, including County Hall, among the 32 London boroughs, said yesterday: "We are very close to signing a contract with Shirayama. Sir Godfrey Taylor, chairman of the LRB, is in Osaka today to sign the contract for the sale."

Shirayama Corporation is a privately owned property company which has pledged to spend £500 million on buying and developing the site. Its proposals include 400 hotel rooms and 300 flats. The debating chamber will be transformed into a conference hall.

sales and marketing director, said yesterday: "The applications of such a system are potentially enormous and we are just at the start. However, there are clear gains to be made if this is used as a security system."

Securicor has shown its device to the Association of Police Officers and the Home Office as well as demonstrating its capabilities to big fleet operators. They are interested in its security applications although they will also be able to plot the best ways to use their vehicles by computing their movements and how often they are out of service.

London Ambulance has just equipped more than 320 vehicles as part of a £1 million scheme to track its vehicles to ensure that they reach emergencies more quickly.

The RAC is also planning to use the transmitter network for its emergency breakdown system.

Bond car fiction turned into fact

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

THE plots of a James Bond movie may seem fanciful but the fictional technology is about to become fact. Soon motorists will be able to fit a tracking device to their own cars so that if they are stolen police will be able to follow the thieves and retrieve the car.

Securicor Datatrak says that it has developed a tiny tracking device for its fleet of cash-carrying security trucks and hopes to make it commercially available in the next few years. It would cost £400 or less and would signal its control room, giving grid references of a car's location, accurate to within 50 metres on an Ordnance Survey map. The device may even be linked to systems sensitive enough to detect when a thief breaks into the car, instantly transmitting a warning signal to Securicor's operators who then track the car's getaway journey.

Car thefts and break-ins have become a major concern. The Association

of British Insurers estimates that 30,000 vehicles a year are stolen to order and then taken across the Channel. They are often luxurious saloons or sports cars which are never seen again.

The Securicor device, designed and manufactured in Britain, would enable police to track the vehicle across the UK. At the moment, use of the device is limited to about 2,000 vehicles.

Securicor has 13 low-frequency transmitters which beam into a small computer on board the vehicle. That enables the car, van or lorry to work out its position and then relay the information to 90 base stations. A central control room can then plot the speed, destination and position of the vehicle. Inside the car, there is a small display screen that can flash up messages and electronics experts are working on an aerial that could be installed out of the sight of thieves.

Philip Poulter, Securicor Datatrak's



Lean look for lean times: two designs by Valentino on the catwalk in Paris yesterday, a black velvet evening dress with zodiac embroideries and a checked tweed jacket with gold stitching, looped short skirt and feathered sheepskin hat. The mood at the shows, which opened nervously last week after a bleak retailing season, has improved after a weekend of stunning collections from some of the top names (Liz Smith writes). Fashion has a new silhouette, narrower on the shoulders, leaner and long. Some of the big designers have defined it and it has little to do with hemlines.

Claude Montana showed sharply cut ankle-length navy coats skimmed over narrow jackets and slim trousers or long skinny cashmere sweater dresses. His other shape was equally lean but finished with a short circle skirt in heavy wool that swung out to the knee. Valentino's narrow fitting line was spelt out in Robin Hood tunic jackets belted over a tiny leather skirt that finished in a series of loops which reappeared on jackets, tunics and short skirts.

Leopard print tights and shoes were worn with everything, jungle spots and tiger stripes were stamped on every-

thing from sheepskin coats to the chiffon evening dresses in his typically pretty finale. The zodiac signs were the theme for his embroideries. Christian Lacroix, inspired by traditional English tweeds, applied his familiar embroideries of embroidery to checked trouser suits.

Trousers were worn cuffed and short, making it hard to distinguish some of them from his mid-calf culottes and long skirts. But here was proof that hemlines are irrelevant. His short skirts did not look demodé, especially when worn with lace tights.

Life & Times section, page 5

Widow, 91, battered at home by thief

BY PETER VICTOR

AN ELDERLY widow is recovering in hospital after an intruder battered and robbed her and left her bleeding from her injuries.

Hilda May Jones, aged 91, suffered a broken arm and fractured cheek and jaw when the man attacked her in the bathroom of her home near Swindon, Wiltshire, on Saturday afternoon. A week ago her purse was stolen after a man claiming to be a gas official called at her home.

In the latest incident, Mrs Jones was punched in the face when she answered a knock on the back door. Her attacker dragged her into a downstairs bathroom where he repeatedly punched her. He searched the house — a tied cottage as Mrs Jones's husband was a former gamekeeper — and fled with £60.

Mrs Jones was found almost three hours later by her daughter, who also lives at the house. Her condition is said to be comfortable.

Police said that on Saturday morning a stocky, smartly dressed man in his 50s, 5ft 4in with glasses, called at a neighbouring house and asked where Mrs Jones lived. The man's clothing would have been heavily blood-stained, police said. "Doctors want to operate on her but she is too poorly. She is just a frail, defenceless 91-year-old. It is appalling and we are already getting lots of calls offering help from people who have been shocked by news of this."

An incident room at Swindon police station has been dealing with the calls and police issued an appeal to the criminal fraternity. Criminals could leave information anonymously, police said.

"We won't ask too many questions about how they know or who they are. All we want is a name to get this person, a detective said."

The officers are used to dealing with brutal attacks but this has sickened them and we want to nail this guy. "Being a gamekeeper's wife and living the country life means she's a fairly tough old lady, but she took a terrible battering. We're just praying she pulls through or we could have a murder hunt on our hands."

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RSPCA secures record convictions

Pet shops accused of encouraging cruelty

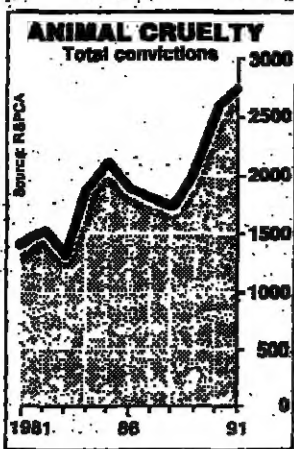
BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

CASES of cruelty to animals have risen steadily, culminating in a record number of criminal convictions last year, the RSPCA says today. Britain is plagued by a frivolous approach to pet ownership, exemplified by the boom in "designer" pets, from small crocodiles to tarantulas, the society says.

Prosecutions of pet shops doubled last year and convictions rose from 29 to 61. The society calls for tougher standards for shops, some of which it says are "shamefully poor". It says that pet dealers, as well as owners, are failing to recognise their responsibilities, and it believes that some traders have fuelled the problem by pandering to the demand for exotic "status symbol" animals.

The society's 1991 workload statistics, published today, show that inspectors investigated 86,531 complaints last year, compared with 85,867 the year before, and secured a record 2,718 convictions, compared with a 1990 total of 2,608. The inspectorate received 1,156,696 phone calls in 1991.

"This decade has been billed by some commentators



as the caring Nineties, but we see little evidence to support that view, and our hopes of reversing the relentless increase in cruelty and abuse have been dashed," Richard Davies, the RSPCA inspectorate's chief officer, said. "We are picking up the pieces in a throwaway culture where animals are often acquired on impulse, and neglected or discarded once they lose their appeal. The recent boom in 'designer' pets is an example of the frivolous approach to pet ownership that plagues this nation. It is vital to make people understand the responsibilities involved in owning an animal."

The society speaks of uncovering a "shameful catalogue" of low standards and poor husbandry in pet shops, and gives instances of a Liverpool dealer who killed a cayman (a type of small crocodile) when he was unable to sell it, and a dealer in Billingham, Lincolnshire, who

sent three tarantulas through the post to Spain in plastic bags, with their legs wrapped tightly round their bodies.

At a shop in Weymouth, it says, a monitor lizard was sold close to death, suffering from mouth rot. The society's report continues: "Conditions at the shop were appalling. Spiders were found in cages so small they could not stretch their legs. Snakes and other reptiles confined in cages with unguarded light bulbs were in danger of burning themselves and a turtle had to swim continuously as there was no landing area in its tank."

Mr Davies said: "It is a scandal that people making their living from animals can prove so callous and ignorant about their basic needs." Among the measures the society wants introduced are tougher licensing standards, compulsory training for staff selling animals, and a requirement for traders to provide proper instruction on caring for the animals they sell.

The society is to organise a mass petition against bullfighting in the run-up to the Barcelona Olympics and Expo 92 in Seville later this year.

"As Spain welcomes the world, we will confront the authorities asking them to end this barbaric form of entertainment," the petition form, launched today, says. "Every year 30,000 bulls are slowly tortured and stabbed to death in Spanish bull-rings. Members are asked to write to their European MPs.



Knowing the ropes: members of the women's team of 217 General Hospital (V) at a Territorial Army skills competition at Pirbright, Surrey, yesterday

Holbein '£8m sale' hangs in balance

BY SARAH JANE CHECKLAND, SALEROOM CORRESPONDENT

SPECULATION continued yesterday as to whether Hans Holbein's *Portrait of a Lady with a Starling* had been withdrawn from auction on April 15 and acquired by private treaty sale for the nation.

The painting became the subject of a furore in heritage circles when Neil MacGregor, director of the National Gallery, objected to the haste in which its owner, the Marquess of Cholmondeley, had apparently gone to market without researching the alternatives. Yesterday Mr MacGregor was at the National Gallery, presumed to be on business connected with the painting. Sources said that £8 million had been raised.

Meanwhile, Christopher Porter, company secretary of Christie's, said: "The suggestion that the Holbein has been saved is total news to me. We have just been having discussions." Charles Allsopp, the chairman, said: "I have been out of the country and know nothing about it. As far as I know, the painting is still going to auction."

Two weeks ago, in an analysis of Lord Cholmondeley's tax position, *The Times* pointed out that he would have to pay only 40 per cent tax were he to sell the Holbein to the nation. Going to auction would probably result in a 60 per cent tax bill.

Man in Armour, held by Glasgow's museum and art gallery, has been verified as a Rembrandt. It will be displayed at the National Gallery's Rembrandt exhibition, opening on Thursday.

Prisoner on the run dies in car crash

An escaped prisoner died and a passenger was critically injured in a head-on collision with a van as they sped past a police patrol in a stolen car. Jason Clark, aged 22, died at a junction in Blechley, Buckinghamshire.

Clark was on the run from Shepton Mallet jail, Somerset where he had served 18 months of a four-year term for theft and burglary. His friend, also 22, was seriously ill in Milton Keynes General Hospital yesterday after emergency surgery. The van driver and his passenger were treated for shock.

Guards praised

One in three of the 315 raids on cash in transit were foiled last year, a quarter through the bravery of van crews and a further 55 through smoke boxes and dummy bags, according to the British Security Industry Association. Attacks were down 8 per cent on 1990, and the amount of cash stolen fell 38 per cent to £7.6 million.

Private railway

A private company is buying a 17-mile stretch of railway between Wymondham and County School in Norfolk to provide a commuter service. The company has exchanged contracts with British Rail to buy East Dereham station for its headquarters.

Spider prank

People trying to use a cash machine in Bournemouth, Dorset were greeted with the sight of a six-inch tarantula lying on the dispenser. RSPCA officials, called to remove the spider, found that it was dead. They said it had been left there as a prank.

Hunt arrests

Thirty-three anti-hunt protesters were arrested in clashes with the Croomie Hunt at White Ladies Aston, Wiltshire, at the weekend. All were released on police bail.

Bond winners

This week's premium bond winners are: £100,000, number 2985 61616, holder lives in Kent (value of holding, £101); £50,000, 35128 61935, Hampshire (£10,000); £25,000, 4PK 694278, Suffolk (£243).

Needless x-rays 'cost lives'

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

X-RAYS could be cut by a fifth, saving £50-£60 million a year for the health service, according to a study by a working party of the Royal College of Radiologists. Besides the financial saving, up to 100 deaths from cancer could be prevented each year. X-rays are responsible for 90 per cent of the exposures to radiation from man-made sources.

Doctors in six hospitals voluntarily cut their requests for x-rays by up to 80 per cent when issued with guidelines on their use, the working party says in the *British Medical Journal*. Many cut their referrals by 30-40 per cent, although the overall average was 7.7 per cent for in-patients and 8.9 per cent for out-patients. The guidelines are based on ten years' work and the expertise of nearly 1,000 consultants.

A 1990 report by the National Radiological Protection Board said that unnecessary radiation from x-rays "could be responsible for between 100 and 250 of the 160,000 cancer fatalities that occur each year".

In a survey last year, the college found that some doctors ordered up to 25 times more x-rays for every 100 patients than others, but could not explain why.

It also revealed that five out of six centres investigated could not meet the legal requirements set out in the 1988 Ionising Radiation Regulations, which specify that doses of radiation must be kept "as low as reasonably achievable".

Many doctors refer patients for too many x-rays to protect themselves from negligence claims. But the *BMJ* warned last year that "litigation will almost certainly arise from the inappropriate use of diagnostic radiation in the future".

The working party says that issuing guidelines alone will not be enough to alter doctors' habits. But there is "enormous pressure" to resist the introduction of stricter controls, it says.

Emergency housing scheme

Refugees' homes attacked

WHEN Alfred Deras moved into a new housing scheme in Newham, east London, two weeks ago, he thought that his housing problems were over.

After two years of bed and breakfast hostels, temporary accommodation and the street, the unemployed Ugandan refugee, aged 28, had been given a new one-bedroom flat. It is part of a £650,000 development of 12 in two three-storey blocks completed by the London and Quadrant Housing Trust and funded by the Housing Corporation on behalf of the African Refugee Housing Association.

The day after his arrival, all the windows at the back of his home were smashed. A spate of similar attacks on the other African families who had moved into the block followed. Mr Deras attributes the attack to simple racism tinged with jealousy that African families were being housed in the

When refugees are granted homes in this country they may think their troubles are over. But for some, Rachel Kelly reports, new problems are just beginning

borough. "Yes, of course it was upsetting," he said. "But the person who attacked someone who cannot easily be scared." Mr Deras, a former Ugandan government employee, was repeatedly threatened while he remained in Uganda.

One in ten people who apply to Newham's homelessness services is a refugee. Newham council estimates that the borough's Somali refugee population alone stands at 7,000. In response to such pressing need the Labour council's housing department has made housing refugees a priority this year and is actively supporting housing associations which can meet this need. Barry Simons, New-

ham's director of housing, said: "Newham has a rapidly growing refugee population, many of whom have endured horrendous situations and who are now faced with the twin problems of homelessness and an alien and often hostile environment."

The council is working with the African Refugee Association to establish self-help groups among the refugee community and to set up a refugee centre. The Refugee Council said that there were no precise figures on the numbers of refugees in the country, but in 1991, 45,000 refugees applied for asylum. About 80 per cent have been successful but more recently the numbers have been significantly reduced. Kate Allen, the council's settlement director, said:

About 2,500 refugees were housed by councils in the United Kingdom in 1990, about 1 per cent of people housed by councils. Ms Allen said: "The others are left to fend for themselves. Most do not qualify under legislation for priority need for council housing as single young men."

There was a significant increase in street homelessness among refugees, Ms Allen said. "Most refugees have to live in the worst type of the private rented accommodation, hostels or in the street." But as Mr Deras's experiences have shown, even when they do find a more permanent home, their problems do not stop there.



Home truth: Alfred Deras, whose windows were smashed the day after he moved into his flat

Airport fare passes with flying colours

BY JOE JOSEPH

YOU might assume that anyone who chooses to eat breakfast at Heathrow airport for three months running is either extraordinarily unlucky with a succession of prolonged flight delays or is being paid plenty of money.

Egon Ronay the food critic was presumably paid plenty of money by the airport's authorities when he was hired to breakfast, incoherently, for three months and report on how to improve the food dished up at Heathrow.

By squealing on careless cooks, Mr Ronay says he has sharpened service. But when he asserts that breakfast at Heathrow now beats breakfast in any other European airport you wonder whether

Mr Ronay is a stay-at-home type, or is perhaps reeling a bit from the understandable after-effects of eating too many *Fried Eggs Leatherette* and *Cold-style Toast*.

Mr Ronay confesses to stacking the odds by choosing "the first meal of the day and the only one for which the British have ever had a reputation for excellence". Even so, it is almost as challenging to swallow his cheery conclusions (which will be distributed free to passengers at Heathrow from mid-April) as it is to swallow breakfast in Terminal One.

The first difficulty in digesting Mr Ronay's findings is that his disguise must have been twiggled early on.

Very few people eat breakfast day after day at Heathrow. Most of them would be carrying a tell-tale flight bag or dressed in purple track suits. Was Mr Ronay?

Second, how many habitual Heathrow breakfasters stay for "an average of an hour and a half" and stack their tray with "fruit juice, bacon, sausage, eggs fried and/or scrambled, mushrooms, baked beans, kippers, croissants, toast, rolls, pastries, tea and coffee" as well as occasionally adding "fruit salad, hash browns, black pudding and meat or vegetable samosas"?

Even though Mr Ronay was not eating alone, you assume it would dawn on even

the doziest server that the catering inspectors were in. Professional food inspectors are different from you and me. They have more

clout. Mr Ronay admits that, at first, he met "pre-cooked fried eggs stacked like a multi-storey car park" and tomatoes served "almost completely raw or virtually incinerated". When Mr Ronay grassed on such transgressors they "reacted positively": cash prizes for whichever outlet he most favoured at the end of the project must have helped.

In the end, *The Grumpy* in Terminal Three won the contest. Rush before the French and Italians hear about it. No reservations necessary.

Hull recalls its rebellious past

BY ROBIN YOUNG

THE city of Hull, which claims to be the birthplace of the English civil war, is preparing to re-enact its historic refusal to allow Charles I to enter in April 1642 as part of a festival of events commemorating the 350th anniversary of the conflict between Roundheads and Cavaliers.

Hull, which is also the first

city to be visited by a touring exhibition of civil war arms and armour from the collections of the Royal Armouries, sponsored by *The Times*, has recruited Lord Hotham, a direct descendant of Sir John Hotham, the governor who turned the king away, to take the part of his ancestor in the re-enactment on Saturday, April 25. Sir John's stand in favour of the rebellious parlia-

mentarians was taken on April 23, 1642, after discussions with the MP for Hull and some city aldermen in what has become known as the "plotting room" in the house he occupied as governor. Twice that day he refused the king entry.

The Royal Armouries exhibition will be at the Town Docks Museum, Hull, from April 11 to May 31.

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Rousing speeches give Tory campaign fillip

Major peps up the candidates with his tough new image

BY ROBIN OAKLEY
POLITICAL EDITOR

BOLSTERED by a strong endorsement of his leadership from Margaret Thatcher, John Major told the Conservative candidates rally in London yesterday that their task was to present the Tories to the country as a party which would spread wealth where Labour would confiscate it.

In a clear effort to counter accusations of a negative Tory campaign, he promised that the Tories would concentrate on the basics in schools that would be regularly inspected, which would publish their results and which would offer parents a choice.

They would produce a new attitude in the public services and increase spending on the health service year by year. They stood for wider ownership still "for rents to mortgages, home-ownership and imaginative new ways to ownership in housing. For every firm to do more to spread

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ownership to its employees, an end to a world in which there were share options for directors but never for staff."

Mr Major said: "Tell them we will be giving a new incentive, new help to the millions of young people who want personal pensions of their own." The Conservatives, he said, stood for "the power to choose, in schools, in housing, in the conduct of daily life through lower tax. Tell them we stand for sound money and stable prices. For freedom from trade union dominance. For freedom from council interference. For the family and the individual first and the state only when needed."

Under a Tory government there would be more privatisation and contracting out, less secretive attitudes in Whitehall, and the bringing of outside skills into lazy town halls. There would be more policemen back on the beat.

Speaking in his newly combative mode, Mr Major at times almost shouted his lines, insisting that the Conservatives under Mrs Thatcher had changed the face of Britain and that their record should be proclaimed.

Mr Major, who pleased the Tory candidates with his sharper style, said that, by contrast, Labour's tax plans were spiteful, hurting millions of skilled people to give others payouts of no more than a few pence a week.

Labour's tax burden "would drive away the huge tide of foreign investment that we have attracted", he said. "It is the politics of the stone age, the politics of envy. Economic illiteracy with a dash of calculated malice - intended to wound, intended to bite and we will make sure it is doomed to failure."

The prime minister said the Tories should proudly boast of their achievements, but make no apology for campaigning on Labour's tax and spending plans, which went to the very heart of the election.

Earlier Mrs Thatcher had won loud cheers when she paid tribute to the prime minister's leadership and warned the candidates: "Everything we have gained could so easily be lost unless we are returned for a fourth term under John Major's leadership."

Like Mr Major, she emphasised that there remained a huge gap between the Conservative and Labour approaches, Labour was still socialist, and deliberately set out to impose more government control over people's lives. "That's why they love that socialist Delors' socialist charter. When will they learn you cannot build Jerusalem in Brussels?" The socialists had not changed their spots, only their suits.

Promising her "most earnest endeavour to win that further period in office that we believe you need and we believe our country deserves", she was cheered throughout her brief speech.

Mrs Thatcher scoffed at the prospect of a hung parliament, saying: "A hung parliament would hang the future of our country. It took 100 days for Belgium to form a coalition."

One hint of criticism of her successor came when she said: "This manifesto has John Major's approach stamped on it and that is absolutely right. But amid the enormous detail in this very full document we must make sure voters do not lose sight of the really big issues that are at stake in this election."

There was, too, a brief warning against governments borrowing too much. But Mrs Thatcher had clearly come to praise her successor not to bury him and the candidates who left the hall were well pleased with the display of unity on the platform and the definition of their task by the prime minister.



Shake on it: Denis Healey, the former Chancellor, canvassing in Streatham, where Labour hopes to overturn a 2,407 Tory majority

Kinnock woos business leaders

By JILL SHERMAN

NEIL Kinnock yesterday launched a "business front" offensive to reassure industrialists that Labour would not revert to economic policies of the sixties and seventies and would do nothing to penalise industry when he took office.

Over croissants and scrambled eggs in the Harvest Room at the London Hilton, Park Lane, Mr Kinnock set out to persuade a selection of mainly Labour supporters

that the party was intent on a strict monetary policy combined with a strong supply side policy to ensure a stable and supportive business environment.

Mr Kinnock, Gordon Brown, shadow trade spokesman, and Margery Mowlem, city spokeswoman, answered questions from about 50 businessmen and women who had been gathered together by the "Labour" peer, Lord Hollick. Asked by one businessman to address fears in the city that Labour's plans would hit small and medium sized businesses, Mr Kinnock insisted that any measures helping industry in the March 10 budget, such as softening the impact of the unified business rate, exempting small businesses from inheritance tax and having the special tax on new cars, would be kept under a Labour government.

Asked by Jarvis Asdale, Chairman of Wembley Stadium Ltd, whether Labour would change its tune after it took office, Mr Kinnock said it would be an "exercise in throat slitting" by any serious fiscal party if they did what the Tories claimed they would do, raise spending by £37 billion and raise taxes by £1,000 per year for the average family.

Smith contradicts Hattersley with pledge of 50p tax limit

By PHILIP WEBSTER
AND LOUISE HIDALGO

JOHN Smith yesterday contradicted Roy Hattersley and gave an unequivocal pledge that Labour's 50p top rate of tax would not be increased. The shadow chancellor also set out his target for the achievement of inflation at the average of the European Community.

His refusal to match John Major's target of zero inflation was attacked by the Conservatives last night. Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, said it proved Labour was "soft on inflation".

Asked whether he would make the battle against inflation the "overriding priority", Mr Smith said he would make control of it "a very important feature of economic policy". He added that he would also make economic

growth and high levels of employment important features of his policy, and would seek to attain equilibrium in the balance of payments.

Mr Lamont said last night: "The public has heard that the defeat of inflation is not an overriding objective. Stable prices for him means reasonable inflation, or whatever level you care to choose. No doubt for him that would be whatever level the trade unions wanted and damn the consequences."

Appearing on the BBC 1 programme *On the Record*, Mr Smith found himself questioned about remarks by Mr Hattersley earlier in the day. Interviewed by David

Frost on TV-Am, Mr Hattersley was asked: "Are you saying that throughout the life of the next parliament we should know that the top rate of income tax will not under any circumstances go above 50p?"

The deputy leader replied: "No, we have not said that. John Smith has not said that and nobody would say that. We have said it regarding the standard rate. That is absolutely clear."

When this was put to Mr Smith, he said the position was "quite clear", adding: "50p will be the top rate of tax under a Labour government." He quipped that it was "very kind of Roy to seek to give me some flexibility."

It was the second time since the election campaign began that Mr Hattersley has had to be corrected by his front-bench colleagues. Last Wednesday he had cast doubt over

Labour's manifesto pledge to take water back into public control from public ownership. He said that a Labour government might buy back shares, a suggestion that John Cunningham, the campaigns chief, overturned the following day.

In the interview, Mr Smith responded to the challenge that Labour had stoked up pay expectations among public-sector workers and would be forced to give inflationary wage rises. He said any "sensitive government" would want to halt the deterioration in pay and conditions, but Labour would have to take account of the capacity of the economy to sustain increases "however justified the claims are". Mr Smith said his objective was to keep inflation at about the European Community average.



United stand: Mr Major and Mrs Thatcher at yesterday's rally of Tory candidates

Ashdown ridicules Tories over pact

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major would be guilty of "a discreditable and irresponsible act" if he risked the peace of Northern Ireland by trying to reach a deal with the Ulster Unionists in the event of a hung parliament, Paddy Ashdown said yesterday.

The Liberal Democrat leader described a newspaper report that a minority Tory government would seek backing from Unionist MPs rather than the Liberal Democrats as one of the most sinister events of the campaign. Such a move after the election would be utterly discreditable, he said.

In addition, the Liberal Democrat strategists last night agreed to Mr Ashdown's demand to make a massive boost to education spending a condition for supporting a Labour or Tory government in a hung parliament.

The party emerged from the first full week of campaigning with the polls hovering at around 17 per cent, a rise of 1.6 percentage points overall on the week. The decision to make education a priority for any post-electoral deal was made after reports to the strategy team from Mr Ashdown and the constituencies that there was strong grassroots support for the party's plans for a 1p rise on the basic rate of income tax to boost education and training for all ages. The party will today launch a further policy document on education, *The Liberal Democrat Guarantee*.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *The World This Week* about the prospect of a Conservative/Unionist pact, Mr Ashdown said yesterday: "We now understand that [the Conservatives] are prepared if necessary to place the peace of Ulster at risk as a price to ensure that they stay in government in the case of a minority government being elected."

He added: "I cannot understand how John Major, under whose government incremental but important progress has been made at a very considerable price in blood and misery in North-

ern Ireland, is now prepared to place that at risk by making a future government of our country depend upon those who would like to reverse the course of peace in Northern Ireland."

"If the Conservatives are serious about that, then I believe that is one of the most discreditable and irresponsible acts of a government for a very long time."

The Liberal Democrats are defending 22 seats compared with 13 held by the various Ulster Unionist parties. Although little change in the political map of Northern Ireland is predicted, the Liberal Democrats could well end up with fewer seats after April 9.

Mr Major and his senior cabinet colleagues have repeatedly said they would not negotiate a post-electoral pact with Mr Ashdown in a hung parliament, but have not ruled out seeking the support of Unionist MPs.

Mrs Thatcher scoffed at the prospect of a hung parliament, saying: "A hung parliament would hang the future of our country. It took 100 days for Belgium to form a coalition."

One hint of criticism of her successor came when she said: "This manifesto has John Major's approach stamped on it and that is absolutely right. But amid the enormous detail in this very full document we must make sure voters do not lose sight of the really big issues that are at stake in this election."

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POLLWATCH by Ivor Crewe

Democrats gain at Tories' expense

THE results of yesterday's crop of polls ranged from a 1 per cent Conservative lead (Harris/Observer) to a 5 per cent Labour lead (ICM/Sunday Express) and sent mixed signals about the parties' performance on the key issues.

Has party support shifted? Yes, but not much. Labour's lead has risen from 1.0 to 2.2 per cent since the previous weekend because Liberal Democrat support has risen slightly at the Conservatives' expense. The average change over the week in the five comparable Sunday polls is: Conservatives down 1.4 to 38.4 per cent, Labour down 0.2 to 40.6 per cent, Liberal Democrats up 1.6 to 16.6 per cent.

Could this small shift simply be sampling error? No, it's probably real. The Conservative vote fell in four of the five polls (and stayed

thesame in the fifth) while the Liberal Democrat vote increased in three and stayed the same in two. In the two polls which reinterviewed the previous week's "panel" of respondents - the most reliable way of measuring change - the Tories were net losers of votes and the Liberal Democrats net gainers.

Which party leader was the star of the week? None. The award goes to John Smith, the shadow chancellor, who opened up a massive 32 point lead over Norman Lamont as the voters' preferred chancellor, according to NOP in the Mail

on Sunday. Mr Smith's presentation of Labour's budget appears to have mollified at least some voters' continuing worries about Labour's tax plans and economic competence.

Which party leader is winning the prime ministerial stakes? John Major, still. But the incumbent usually is the voters' first preference and Neil Kinnock and Paddy Ashdown have risen in voters' estimation. In the MORI/Sunday Times panel Major's "satisfaction rating" fell from +14 to +9, while Kinnock's improved from -12 to -2 and

Ashdown's from -38 to -40. Similar changes were reported in other polls. Major's narrowing popularity advantage over Kinnock is not the electoral asset for the Conservatives it once was.

Are voters' party preferences on particular issues changing? The NOP/Independent on Sunday panel found that the Conservatives' rating for economic competence had fallen from +8 to +5 while Labour's had improved from -7 to +1. But the MORI/Sunday Times panel found that the Conservatives' lead over Labour for "managing the economy" widened from 34-28 to 40-31 over the week.

If the Conservatives are preferred on the dominant issues of the economy and taxes, why have they lost ground? Because the politicians' agenda is not the voters' agenda. Respondents told MORI that the most important issues "in helping [me] to decide which party to vote for" were health (50 per cent - up 10 points from last week), schools (39 per cent - up 13 points) and jobs (39 per cent) - all favourable issues for Labour. The Liberal Democrats are making some headway on education, which is proving a more salient issue in this election than in any since the war.

What result do the polls point to? Stalemate. All but seven of this year's 47 polls imply a hung parliament. Assuming a uniform national swing, the weekend's polls translate into Labour 312 seats, Conservatives 302, Liberal Democrats 14, Nationalists 6, Irish 17. If special local factors enabled the Liberal Democrats to win 20 seats and the Scottish Nationalists 8 Labour would win 307 seats to the Conservatives 296, producing a deadlocked parliament.

Ivor Crewe is professor of government at the University of Essex

The show must go on — but can anyone think why?

Why must the show go on? sang Noel Coward. It can't be all that indispensable. To me it really isn't sensible. On the whole To play a leading role When fighting those tears you can't control...

On Friday last week, the prime minister rose a little after 5am, washing, dressing and breakfasting hastily, and was ready for a series of press briefings beginning at six. At 8.30 he was due at a press conference in Smith Square.

Immediately after that, he flew to Bradford. You may remember his trip to B&Q for a walkabout and photo opportunities. A reception at Yorkshire Television and lunch in Leeds, with regional editors, followed. On almost every occasion he was expected to say a few words.

We're asked to condole With each irremediable soul Who sets out to be loudly applauded...

Then he went to the Corn Exchange for a public meeting.



CAMPAIGN SKETCH

MATTHEW PARRIS

Another speech. But soon he had to fly. There was the little matter of his adoption as Conservative candidate in Huntingdon to be disposed of. Another speech.

Finally, back to London. At Downing Street, a series of meetings started at 10pm. Mr Major was in bed after midnight. There was time for four or five hours' sleep before Saturday's programme began.

Or take an average Sunday - yesterday, for instance - for an average voter - me, for instance - trying to keep up with the general election. It was necessary to be up at dawn in order to watch the previous evening's video of *A Week in Politics*. It had clashed with the 7 o'clock news on BBC2.

ready for Frost on Sunday with Roy Hattersley, Des Wilson and Douglas Hurd. As this finishes, he will be awaiting the delivery of the Sunday newspapers.

These must be read rapidly for, by noon, in the Midlands, Central's election programme with Edwina Currie would be under way, followed by Brian Walden's interview with Mr Major at 1.10. Jonathan Dimbleby's interview with John Smith clashed. It would have to be videoed.

To the newspapers, fast. The first three pages of *The Sunday Times* were all about the election. Then there was the eight-page election special pullout. The leading article was about the election too. So was much of the *News Review* section

and a large part of the business supplement. *The Sunday Telegraph* and the *Observer* would have to wait. There was the John Smith video to be viewed. Then there would be the splash in *The Independent* on Sunday to study - if there was time, that is, before Bryan Gould was to be interviewed by a computer on *Star Chamber* at 5.30pm. Peter Lilley and Norman Lamont were on *The Money Programme* at half past six. Hopefully this would finish before the *Channel Four News Election Special* at seven. The tabloids would have to wait: especially as at 9pm comes *News Hour* on the BBC World Service, always the best way of standing back a little from the fray.

Enough! This election is entering a phase similar to that in which the Gulf war languished for weeks. It was obviously important, but nothing was actually happening. The consequence was that the media felt they should shelve other news and concentrate on a picture which was scarcely changing. Responsi-

ble citizens felt they ought to talk about it. There was nothing, however, to say.

I watched Paddy Ashdown flailing through a militant housing estate in Liverpool on Friday. They had allowed him eight minutes there. He was lunging out hopelessly in all directions, shaking hands, learning nothing, and having no fun at all. Nor were the residents, nor were the press. So...

Why not announce the closing night of it?

The public seem to hate the sight of it.

Dear And so Why you should undergo This terrible strain we'll never know. Surely there are other things to talk about. Did you know, for instance, that a poll in yesterday's *Sunday Mirror* shows that 57 per cent think that Fergie should earn her own living while 33 per cent think...

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الطاقة والسرعة

Kinnock's campaign veterans eager to build on flying start

By PHILIP WEBSTER
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

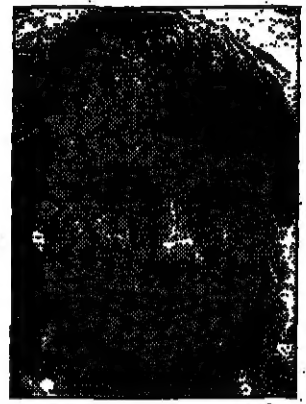
IF LABOUR'S campaign team has an obvious advantage over the Conservatives, it is that its members are more battle-hardened. The key players manning the controls at the party's Walworth Road headquarters, in constant touch with their colleagues in Neil Kinnock's entourage, seem to have been around a long time.

Peter Mandelson, Labour's former director of campaigning and almost certainly the next MP for Hartlepool, built Labour's publicity machine into an effective force that became the envy of its opponents. Labour was felt to have won the 1987 campaign, although it lost the election. David Hill, the man now in Mr Mandelson's job and one of the few backroom figures to have worked for Labour in government, is trying to go one better.

He has made a flying start. In the eyes of most impartial observers, Labour's campaign took the honours in the first full week of the campaign. The decision to stage a shadow budget was a huge gamble; even more so was the

decision to try to take maximum publicity from it before and afterwards. It is uncertain whether the contents will eventually damage Labour as the campaign unfolds, but it undoubtedly gave Labour the initiative by presenting it as a government-in-waiting with an economic programme fully worked out and aching to get in to implement it.

Mr Hill, a shrewd political operator who is popular with the media but gets tough when he needs to, worked for



Hill: fiercely loyal press secretary

Roy Hattersley when the deputy leader was prices secretary in the last Labour government and throughout the long years in opposition, before being appointed to his post last year. He missed out on the job to John Underwood when Mr Mandelson left, but got a second chance when Mr Underwood resigned last year after a clash of personalities in the Labour press office.

He is one of the key figures around the table when John Cunniff, Labour's campaign chief, chairs the daily planning meetings at 6.45 each morning. In the party's campaign offices on Millbank, by the Thames. Along with Mr Kinnock's entourage, these are the people who will get the plaudits if Labour pulls it off on April 9, and will return to anonymity if it does not.

Julie Hall, aged 33, is Mr Kinnock's hard-working and fiercely loyal press secretary. She and Charles Clarke, Mr Kinnock's chief of staff throughout his time as Labour leader, are on the road with him, liaising with Mr Hill and Neil Stewart, another Kinnock aide installed in Walworth Road for the election, about campaign developments.

Ever-present at the morning meeting is a man whose colleagues regard him as one of Labour's true unsung stars. Jim Parish is effectively the stage manager, who has to ensure that the press conferences and policy launches go well. He is a perfectionist, responsible for set design, installing the sound systems, lighting, and the entrances and exits of the shadow cabinet speakers.

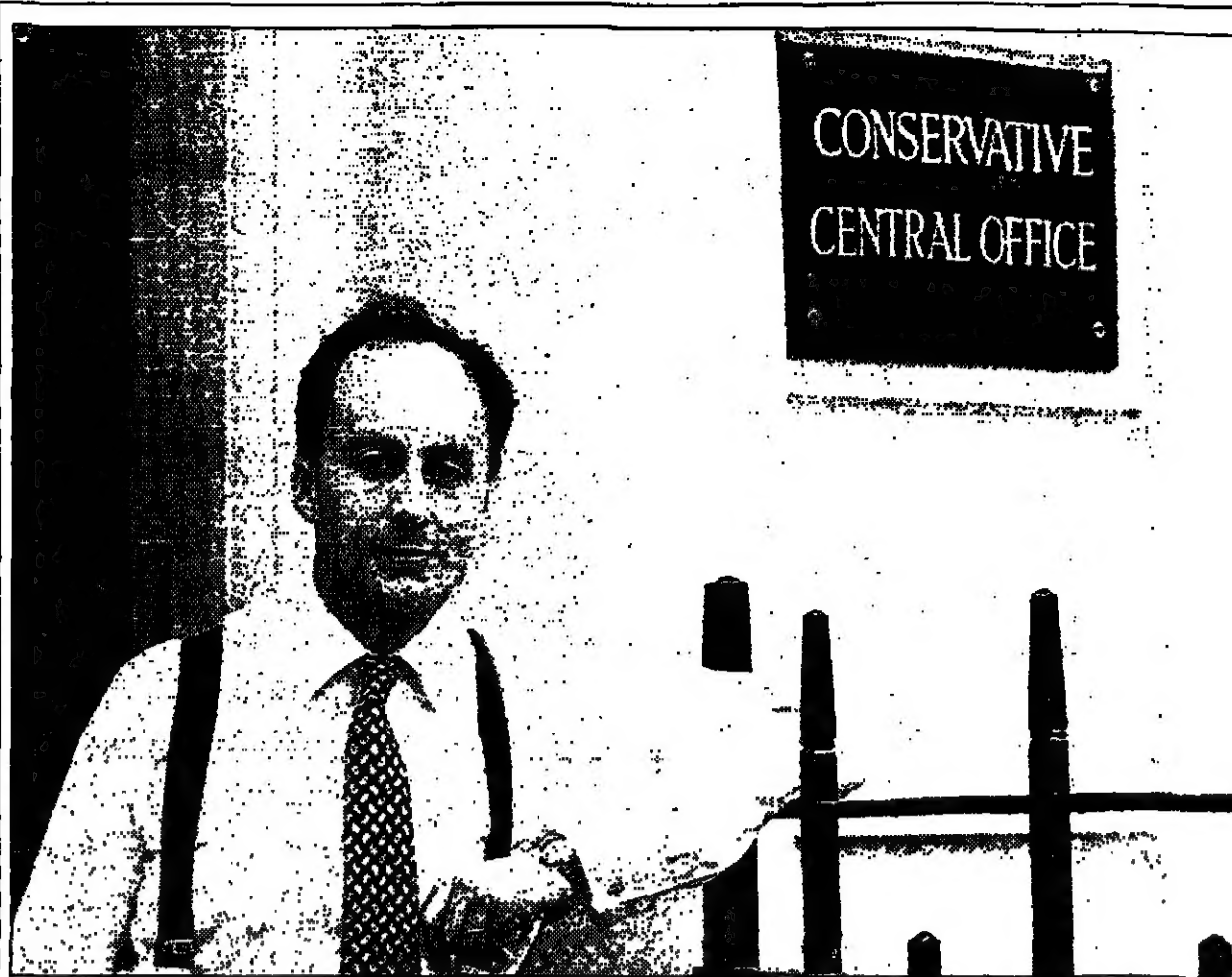
He worked closely with Mr Mandelson both before, during and after the 1987 election and both Mr Mandelson and Mr Hill speak highly of him.

Philip Gould, head of the communications agency that was pivotal in the transformation of Labour's image, is another daily attendee at the 6.45 meeting, advising on polling, advertising and political broadcasts. Mr Gould, aged 41, is the man who detects the trends behind the polling figures and tells the party the issues it should be concentrating on. He works closely with Patricia Hewitt, Mr Kinnock's former press secretary and deputy director of the Institute of Public Policy Research.

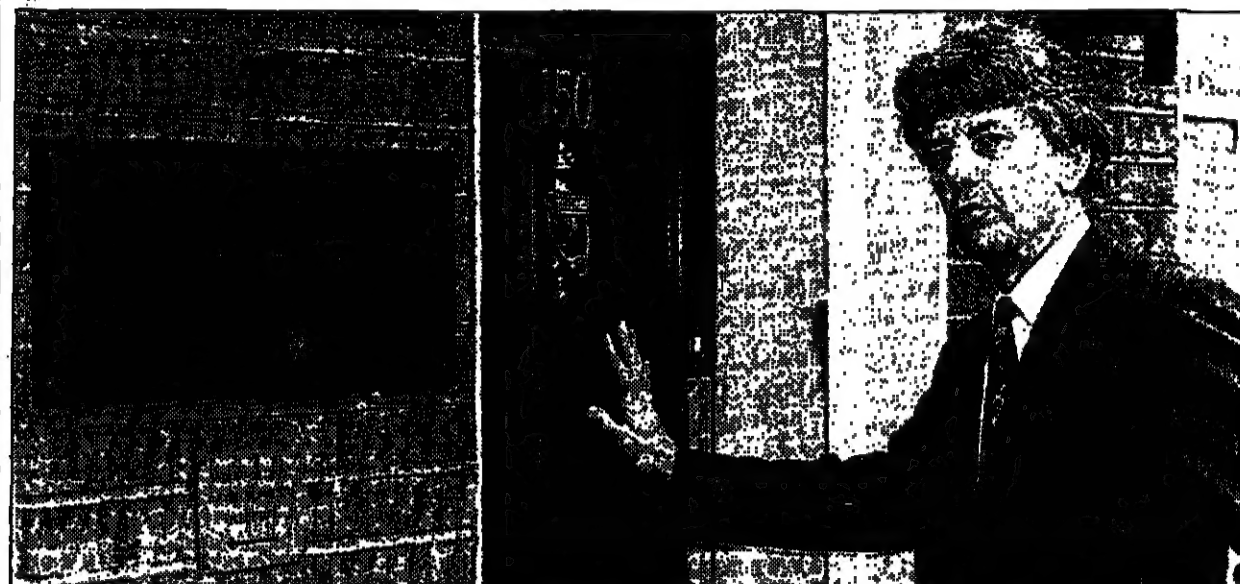
Larry Whitty, Labour's general secretary, attends the daily meetings, making sure that campaigning decisions are swiftly dispatched to the party's regional headquarters. Gez Sagar, aged 29, the chief press and broadcasting officer since last year, is another of the behind-the-scenes figures whom the shadow cabinet most values. He came to the Labour party after a spell on local papers, and has cut his campaigning teeth in recent by-elections.

There is no complacency among the campaign team. It believes, however, that it has an advantage over its less experienced rivals at Smith Square and its members have been started at Conservative tactics in week one.

"I cannot understand what the Tories were trying to do last week," one said yesterday. "They spend a year building up John Major as the polite, soft-spoken, popular man of the people. He was supposed to be above the battle. Then, at the first sign of things going wrong, they throw all that over and get him snarling at the Labour party. If you draw up a strategy that you think is right, you have to stick to it."



Media guru: Shaun Woodward, the Tories' director of communications, at Conservative Central Office



Stage manager: Jim Parish, Labour's senior campaign manager, at the Walworth Road headquarters

Strain starts to show on Major's round-the-clock 'brat pack'

By NICHOLAS WOOD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

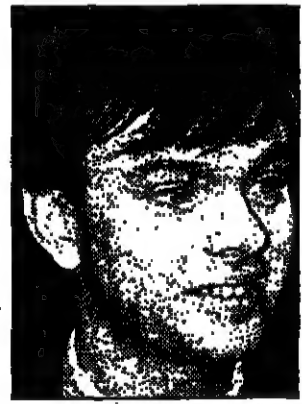
YOU can spot them a mile off. Bags under the eyes, pallid skins and an occasional weariness of step. They are the backroom team behind the Tory election campaign and they can be forgiven for feeling the strain.

Since the phoney war began in January they have been working around the clock. Now the gloves are off, life is one endless round of photo-opportunities, media calls, dawn press conferences, strategy meetings and hectic journeys across the country. Some are up before 5 am and do not get to bed until after midnight. The old hands at Conservative Central Office call them the "brat pack". Youth, adrenalin and bacon sandwiches from the office canteen will have to carry them through to April 9.

The Tory campaign is divided into three parts: central office in Smith Square, Downing Street and John Major's battle-bus.

The biggest concentration of manpower is in Smith Square, where Shaun Woodward, aged 33, the director of communications, holds court. Mr Woodward, who joined the team in early 1991 and like many of his colleagues has never fought an election, previously worked on Esther Rantzen's show *That's Life*. He is married to Camilla Sainsbury, daughter of Tim Sainsbury. Mr Woodward is Mr Patten's media guru and takes a particular close interest in the television and advertising aspects of the campaign.

Andrew Lansley, aged 35, the director of research, is another key player. His job is to fashion the bullets for the



Collins: the resident "spin doctor"

senior politicians to fire, to provide briefing material for candidates and to lend substance to the soundbites and images of the campaign.

Patrick Rock, aged 40, is another vital cog in the machine. Mr Patten's special adviser at the environment department before moving with his boss to central office in 1990, he is the chief link between campaign headquarters and the London-based senior political reporters.

David Cameron, the head

of central office's economic section, has also emerged as a power behind the throne after four years with the party since leaving Oxford. He came to the fore briefing the prime minister for his twice-weekly Commons jousts with Neil Kinnock. Now he is part of the dawn brigade, updating Chris Patten and then Mr Major on the morning papers before the 8.30 am press conferences.

Steve Hilton, aged 22, and Alex Aitken, who is only a few years older, give the best pack of the year to walk the corridors of the parliamentary lobby at Westminster. Now he has the even more daunting task of trying to shape the morning papers on the bumpy ride of the campaign trail.

Edward Llewellyn, aged 26, has been with CCO since 1988. He briefs the prime minister on what to expect at the next stop on the battle-bus.

Back at Downing Street, the staff are rather thinner on the ground than in normal times. Gus O'Donnell, the prime minister's press secretary, and Jonathan Haslam, his deputy, are sidelined by their civil service status for the duration of the campaign. Nicholas True, aged 40, the chief speech-writer, is taking the brunt of the battle, with help from Stephen Sherbourne, aged 46, a powerful figure in the Thatcher era, who has made a surprise comeback. Sarah Hogg, aged 45, the head of the policy unit, is also on hand to advise the prime minister.

use of her TV experience to cope with the broadcasters.

Mr Hill first met Mr Major at Chelsea's football ground when he was working for Kenneth Clarke at the trade department and the prime minister was a junior figure. Now this history graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, with a publishing and City background, finds himself at the seat of power.

Mr Collins, a former special adviser to Michael Howard, has made a big impact since given rein at the turn of the year to walk the corridors of the parliamentary lobby at Westminster. Now he has the even more daunting task of trying to shape the morning papers on the bumpy ride of the campaign trail.

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Bolton incident lets slip the dogs of war

By NICHOLAS WOOD
POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

THE new, improved John Major that came to life towards the end of the first week of the election campaign remained something of a political orphan yesterday.

None of his troupe of backroom advisers was in a hurry to claim credit for the prime minister's transformation from Dr Jekyll to the Mr Hyde of the hustings.

On Wednesday, at the lacklustre launch of the Tory manifesto, Mr Major's sociological jargon about "empowering" the people was more calculated to appeal to Essex than Essex man. Yesterday, as Margaret Thatcher stepped out of the shadows to remind her party of past glories, Mr Major could so easily have been eclipsed. He followed one of the hardest acts in town, yet he still landed a few punches of his own. He has come a long way in a few days, although he would be first to acknowledge that one rally does not win a campaign.

Speculation abounds that Mr Major has dismissed Mary Poppins as his speech-writer and hired Lady Macbeth. The truth, his aides insist, is more prosaic.

Nicholas True, who was special adviser to Sir Norman Fowler during his spell as health secretary, remains speech-writer in chief. How-

ever the reappearance at drafting sessions of Stephen Sherbourne and Sir Ronald Millar, two of the sharpest wordsmiths of the Thatcher era, is circumstantial evidence that some of the old favourites are back.

The line from deep inside the Major camp is that the prime minister's more assertive style is all his own work. One senior aide turned amateur psychologist yesterday to explain the change of gear.

Mr Major, who has spent much of his working life among bankers and permanent secretaries, has begun to shed the inhibitions of office and recapture the fire of his days as a Lambeth councillor. "There has not been a conversation or a discussion saying we must take a tougher line," one close observer said. "I genuinely think he's relishing the fight more and more. He feels free to say the things that he wants to say and he's enjoying saying them."

Another insider scorned the popular belief that the prime minister was a nice guy who fell on his feet, and said: "The pushing and shoving in Bolton invigorated him and gave him a lift. It almost electrified him and the speech that night showed that."

As they struggled past the security cordon into the uninspiring confines of the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in central London yesterday, Tory candidates were in poor shape after the battering the party has taken in the polls over the past week.

After an hour of Chris Patten, Mrs Thatcher and Mr Major rallying them for the fray and giving them a message to sell on the nation's doorsteps, they stepped back into the London drizzle in rather better heart.

Last week, Norman Tebbit, the former Tory chairman, was urging his successors to let slip the dogs of war. Yesterday, he was equally succinct. "Put me down as 'Satisfied', of Chingford," he said.

Gnomes ward off visitors

A garden centre manager is marketing gnomes looking like John Major and Neil Kinnock. They are meant to ward off unwelcome canvassers.

Colin Stone, the man behind the idea, believes that if voters put a gnome of a party leader in their front garden, canvassers from rival parties will not call.

The poltigonemes, which cost £18.95, are being distributed from a garden centre in the New Forest.

Rebel attacked

A sharp attack was launched yesterday by the former Winchester MP, Rear Admiral Morgan Giles, on John Browne for deciding to stand as an independent Conservative in the constituency having been deselected by the party. Rear Admiral Giles — who was succeeded by Mr Browne as the MP for the constituency — said: "I would have died of shame rather than stand against my own party."

Fast fringe

Club Lotus, the sports car club, announced yesterday that it was seeking a candidate for its Buy a Lotus Today party. The party wants the government to improve the position of the motor industry and if its candidate is elected, he will press the prime minister to use a Lotus Esprit Turbo for official engagements.

Rival flower

Labour's red rose is to be rivalled by a flower named after John Major. Tony Hickman, a Gloucestershire gardener, who breeds fuchsias, has called his latest creation John Major, after getting written permission from the prime minister. Mr Hickman said: "I chose John Major for the name because I have been very impressed with his leadership."

Advisers relieved to banish memories of the two Davids

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

SOON after 6 o'clock every morning the nine members of Paddy Ashdown's inner circle pass through the splendid portals of the National Liberal Club for the first of the day's strategy meetings.

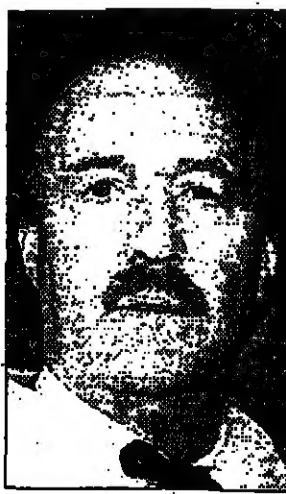
As with John Major, this is Mr Ashdown's first campaign as party leader. Around him he has gathered a mixture of veterans of former elections and devotees drawn from the former Liberal and Social Democrat parties. The Liberal Democrats, and their predecessors, have always been backed by some exceptional backroom teams.

But then they and Mr Ashdown have a series of advantages over the other two parties. He has the lux-

ury of knowing that his political future does not depend on the outcome. There is a lingering sense of relief that, after the interminable warfare following the 1987 election, the new party is well established as a credible third force.

For Des Wilson, the campaign director, and Alec McGivern, his deputy and former SDP national organiser, there is the bonus of having one clear-sighted leader with confidence in his team in place of the two Davids. Memories of that last fraught campaign still haunt the hierarchy.

Privately, apart from the odd moment of euphoria, the strategy hinges of maintaining the party's standing in the early weeks of the campaign and then, it is



Lord Holme: author of much of the manifesto

hoped, creeping upwards in the polls during the final fortnight. For that to happen, the party must be noticed, hence the personal



Clement-Jones: team's contact with grassroots

prominence of Mr Ashdown. And, despite the leader's slight tetchiness at the perpetual question over a hung parliament, the close-

ness of Labour and Conservatives in the polls is, for the time being, guaranteeing the party at least a fair share of media coverage.

Once Mr Ashdown finishes his 7.15 press conference and sets out on his punishing schedule of flying visits, the two veterans left in charge are Mr Wilson and Lord Holme of Cheltenham, who divide strategy and policy between them. Lord Holme is the party's "brains" and to him can be attributed its adherence to electoral reform as a precondition to supporting a minority government. He is the author of much of the party's manifesto.

Between 1964 and 1987, as Richard Holme, publisher and businessman, he fought unsuccessfully four elections and one by-election. A former president of the Liberal party, he was

given a life peerage in 1990 and is now the Liberal Democrats' Northern Ireland spokesman.

Most of Mr Ashdown's speeches are written by Alan Leaman, who rose from being a researcher and press liaison officer to one of his closest aides in the past four years.

As chief press officer, Oly Grender has the task of making sure that Mr Ashdown and his colleagues are given a fair share of television and press coverage and are offered high-profile interviews with editors and producers.

Alison Holmes works for Mr Wilson, focusing on the party political broadcasts. Tim Clement-Jones and Chris Rennard are the contacts with the grassroots of the party, and have responsibility for drawing up strategy for the targeted seats. Mr

Ashdown, meanwhile, is drawing on the patience and self-discipline learnt in the Royal Marines to pace himself as he enters the second full week of the campaign. His stride is a long, fast one, almost as if he hopes he can outdistance his entourage of minders and media and talk to "real people".

Given the personalities of Mr Ashdown and his team, they are unlikely to be caught out by either of the two great dangers of any election campaign: complacency or panic. But the threat of burnout from the 18-hour days being worked will intensify.

What will really test the mettle of the Ashdown platoon is if the polls begin to show the Liberal Democrat vote being badly squeezed and Labour, or the Conservatives, suddenly widening the gap.

Away from the national spotlight, the Tory chairman doorsteps his highly marginal Bath constituency

Patten's on the edge of his seat

By JOHN YOUNG

ON a grey, drizzling afternoon the chairman of the Conservative party strides briskly along the narrow lanes of Combe Down, on the southern fringe of Bath. At the head of a small posse of supporters, including his wife Lavender, he glances at the few passers-by, thumps on cottage doors and drops into corner shops to ask how business is.

This is not Chris Patten, Tory grandee, strategic mastermind, television superstar, scourge of the unbelievers and the waverers. This is Chris Patten, lately MP, fighting for his political survival in one of the most delicately balanced seats in the country. In 1987 he held the seat by just 1,412 votes against the determined challenge of the Alliance candidate, Malcolm Dean, a *Guardian* leader writer.

In marginal Bath, nowhere is more marginal than Combe Down, a village built above and around the mines and quarries from which stone was extracted to construct the great Georgian city. Many of the cottages were built to house the workers: in the 19th century several larger houses were added as summer homes for the wealthy. Since then it has sprawled to no clear pattern or purpose.

In quick succession, Mr Patten calls at the post office, a barber's — "That reminds

BATH

me, I could do with a hair cut," a newsagent and a delicatessen, where he and his wife buy three cheese and bacon pies. The bearded man behind the counter tells him he is leaving to join the army. For a moment the candidate looks slightly disconcerted. "Well, good luck then," he says.

Probably only a politician high on electoral adrenalin could begin to cope with the demands of the dual existence that Mr Patten is forced to lead at present. Every morning he is up at six o'clock at his home near Westminster Cathedral. By seven he is at his desk in Conservative Central Office. Half an hour later he has a meeting with the prime minister.

At 8.30 there is a press conference, followed by further meetings and radio and television interviews. At noon a car arrives to take him to Bath and a helicopter flight to Bath racecourse.

After spending the afternoon in the constituency, he flies back to Westminster unless he has an engagement elsewhere. Last Tuesday he had to make a detour to Luton to take part in a television debate and was not home until midnight.

As yet he shows no signs of exhaustion. "I'm feeling



Uncertain waters: Chris Patten scans *The Times* for encouraging news as he waits for the 7.15 train from London Paddington

fine," he says with a grin. "I will lose a lot of weight, but I badly need to. It was more of a strain waiting for the off. But now we're in the swing of things, I'm quite enjoying it."

Mr Patten is expected to have eight opponents, including Linda St Clair, who has abandoned her Conservative party to stand as an Independent Conservative calling for the legalisation of

brothels. The obvious danger comes from the Liberal Democrats' Don Foster, a former education lecturer at Bristol University and one-time leader of the Liberal group on Avon county council.

"Nationally this is our sixth most winnable seat," Mr Foster says proudly. "We're putting in a tremendous effort, and all the party leaders will be here to sup-

port me. But obviously the Tories will be sending in their big guns as well. They're desperate that Chris should not lose."

Whether "Chris" wins or loses is likely to depend largely on the showing of the third mainstream candidate, Pam Richards. Everyone seems to like "Pam", a former leader of the Labour group on the city council, and she is ex-

pected to fare rather better than her predecessor, who in 1987 polled less than ten per cent of the vote.

Her spacious campaign offices near the abbey are filled with young men in smart suits, a sure sign of Labour's new image. Things have changed a great deal in the past five years, she insists.

Despite "heavy propaganda" from the Liberal

Democrats on the need for tactical voting, Labour is much stronger nationally, and this is bound to sway voters back to her camp, she says.

All sorts of issues have arisen, like unemployment, business failures, empty shops and homelessness and, unlike the Lib Dems, we are in a position to do something about them."

Nuclear power factor tests old loyalties

By RONALD FAUX

THE people of Whitehaven in west Cumbria are inclined to speak their mind. "Now then Jack," a man bawls across the street, "sort out them Tories. Armer 'em."

Jack Cunningham, distinguished parliamentarian, shadow leader of the Commons, former junior energy minister and the town's Labour MP for 21 years cuts a dignified, dark-coated figure, hand-shaking his way to the market place with a retinue of supporters. The morning's work will be to attack the government's record on health care, but a man with a foghorn voice begins a harangue from the other side of the square.

The attack grows louder, more personal and more abusive, and Dr Cunningham whispers "police" to an aide. A passer-by observes that the heckler must be a sandwich short of a picnic and two detectives appear and move the man on. As they do, the candidate becomes somehow involved in the reunion of a mother with her lost child. The woman is hysterical and bursts into tears on Dr Cunningham's lapels. It is turning into one of those days that a campaigning candidate would prefer not to have.

These are difficult times for politicians in west Cumbria. The feeling is that they have some explaining to do. If employment is the lifeblood of an economy, then Copeland, as the constituency is now known, is suffering a haemorrhage. Jobs are disappearing at an alarming rate.

The Volvo works near Workington is closing, production is to end at the west Cumbrian open-cast coalfield in three years. Whitehaven docks are under threat, the Albright and Wilson detergent works at Whitehaven is laying off workers and British Nuclear Fuels at Sellafield, the region's biggest employer, will no longer need thousands of construction workers once the Thorp reprocessing plant is completed.

Dr Cunningham's prediction of an "unemployment calamity" is that 2,000 to

perception remains that Labour is against nuclear energy and is more likely than the Conservatives to shut Sellafield. It is an argument Dr Cunningham has fought at seven elections since he became Whitehaven's MP.

"The Labour stance on nuclear power is not much different from the Tory stance," he said. "They have announced a moratorium on building nuclear plants and two have closed in their years of office."

Labour's position was that dependency on civil nuclear power should diminish. "My personal view is that the world is not going to get by without civil nuclear power."

Even so, for the Labour party there is a warning example in neighbouring Barrow-in-Furness, which is hardly natural Tory territory but which voted in a Conservative MP because of Labour's attitudes towards the Trident programme.

Nuclear industry is a double-edged sword for the candidates in Copeland. Workers who could be counted as Labour party supporters might be persuaded to turn Liberal Democrat or even Tory. In the quiet lanes of Gosforth and Eskdale, where plans for an underground nuclear waste repository have caused alarm, far more posters declare "No to Nirex" than support for the Tory candidate.

THE Conservative party entered the campaign in its deepest financial crisis. Not only has Central Office spent very highly over the past three years, but pressures developing since the 1960s have come to a head.

Since April 1989, the Tories' routine and pre-election activities have cost nearly £50 million, compared with Labour's £24 million and the Liberal Democrats' £5 million.

The root cause of Central

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE good guys and the bad guys are fighting it out in a battle between an environmental movement, big business, politicians and journalists. Much skulduggery and intrigue are promised in *Campaign*, the latest and aptly named novel from Des Wilson, the Liberal Democrats' campaign director.

He is reluctant to divulge whether the plot bears any similarity to the goings-on behind the scenes of the party and its predecessors. But it draws extensively, he admits, on his 25-plus years of dangling his feet in all four

worlds of the plot. The death throes of the Maxwell empire — of which his publishers were part — are holding up proceedings, which means that, unlike in the 1987 election campaign, Mr Wilson is not combining a book launch with masterminding the party's election strategy.

As an unelected and professional campaigner, he is more open than most to criticism and is liable to be singled out as the fall guy if the campaign goes wrong. So far he has either been too shrewd or too lucky to arouse intense jealousies. But he emerged reeling from a recent meeting with candidates in Glasgow at the party's spring conference, as everyone, he moaned, had different views on how the campaign should be run. He appears irrepresible, determined not to be deflected from his task of providing a sense of direction to the campaign.

payments to Labour. The Tories therefore need to be cautious, while the opposition parties will be able to spend more on their central campaigns than in 1987.

When Chris Patten became Tory chairman at the end of 1990, he found that the Central Office deficit in the previous two years was £9.4 million. In the two financial years to March 1991, outgoings soared to £31.6 million. The high spending only partly reflect-



Out of the wreckage of the 1987 campaign with the two Davids, which Mr Wilson describes in *Battle for Power*, he kept faith with his colleagues and took part in a merger process. In the meantime, he wrote a sex and sand thriller, *Costa del Sol*, to keep body and soul together before taking on the role of campaign strategist, unpaid, two years ago.

The seasoned campaigner stuck to his well-tried strategy of requiring his leader to hold his morning press conferences before the competition,

even though that means expecting the media circus to turn out at 7.15 each morning, and him to start at 5.30 to trawl through the newspapers and negotiate the day's agenda with Paddy Ashdown and party advisers. Although for his first 20 years, growing up in the small New Zealand town of Oamaru, he never saw a television set, he has developed the knack of converting events into headlines and sound-bites in his sleep.

With recent polls confirming that the party's support is holding up well, his energies

are directed at countering the "wasted vote" danger. There are two main aims in the next three weeks: to prevent either "soft" Tories, contemplating a shift to the Liberal Democrats, being frightened back into the Tory camp by a Labour surge; and to persuade the anti-Tory voters to opt for the Liberal Democrats rather than Labour, particularly in the 250-plus seats where the old alliance parties came second in 1987. His *My Vote* slogan, a main feature of the campaign, is his way of trying to make a vote for the Liberal Democrats seem both positive and distinctive.

The Mori-Times poll finding that 35 per cent of the electorate said they would vote Liberal Democrat if they thought that they could win confirms the party's need to win over voters without making itself ridiculous by measuring up the carpets and curtains in 10 Downing Street. His message, which will be repeated over and over again, is: "...that's why we say that the only wasted vote in British politics is a vote for those old parties."

His campaigning skills were developed through setting up Shelter, the charity for the homeless, and more recently honed with Clean (the campaign for lead-free petrol), the campaign for freedom of information, and the Parents Against Tobacco sales lobby. At 51, he emerges as a leaner, wiser adviser from his days with the centre parties, and has never lost his boyish and enduring enthusiasm for causes. For now, that cause is Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrats and a clear-sighted conviction that the days of the old two-party system are numbered.

which has created a list of 20,000 individual sponsors, a distinctly untraditional Labour business plan fund was set up in 1988 with the help of a £500,000 loan from the Unity Trust Bank. That included a high value donors initiative that arranged Labour's well publicised £500-a-plate dinners in July 1991 and February 1992, and raised £250,000 through the Co-op Visa credit card plan. The high cost of administering these initiatives has con-

Islamic party fights five seats

By PETER DAVENPORT

THE Islamic Party of Britain, which is contesting the general election for the first time and has candidates in five seats, launched its manifesto yesterday. Its central theme is a call for a radical change in the economic system underpinning the Western world.

Beneath the slogan "Satanic Pursues" the party calls for an end to private banks and interest charges and the creation instead of a national credit office to provide public lending facilities. Such a policy, it argues, would result in lower taxation.

Launching the manifesto in Bradford yesterday, David Musa Pidcock, the party leader, acknowledged the challenge facing his party. He said: "Somebody has said that trying to change anything in the present system is like David and Goliath. But one is reminded of the opinion polls on that morning, and they were hardly in David's favour. We have the task of lobbing a stone in this particular arena and hoping it strikes the right place."

The party was launched in 1989 and fought its first mainstream political campaign in the Bradford North by-election in 1990. It finished fourth with 3 per cent of the vote; Labour won.

There are about 1.5 million Muslims in the country and the party has selected seats in constituencies where it believes that it can achieve significant support.

The *Sunday Telegraph* political columnist, Frank Johnson, argued that Mr Major had shown himself as unsuitable to fight the class war as Asquith was to fight the first world war and Chamberlain to fight the second. That insight won support from the most surprising quarter, Labour's media manipulator in 1987, Peter Mandelson, now fighting as Labour candidate in Hartlepool. In his column in *The People*, Mr Mandelson said: "While John Major is being seen sitting Val Doonican-style among slumbering Tory fans, Neil Kinnock is out there galvanising the nation. Don't be surprised if we start seeing less of Mr Major and more of swashbuckling Tarzan — Michael Heseltine. And when it becomes desperate, wait for the call to bring back Maggie, Norman and Cecil."

Enter Tarzan and Mrs Thatcher — this time on the same side. The decision to push Mrs Thatcher centre stage was in fact made four weeks ago and the story pushed all those nasty opinion polls out of the bigger headlines. Whoever planted it was bowling a public relations googly worthy of Mr Mandelson in his prime.

Central Office big spenders forced to tighten their belts

Extravagance plus static donations from major firms have plunged Tory funds deep in crisis. Michael Pinto-Duschinsky examines the books

March 1978, the last date for which information was published, the reserves were down to £726,000, while the

excess of spending over income between 1978-9 and 1990-1 was more than £13 million. The present deficit

is probably about £12-15 million.

To raise enough to cover even a modest election, Central Office's expenses and debts, the party will need to collect at least £30 million in the coming year.

The combination of a multi-million pound overdraft, the uncertain results of a fighting fund appeal during and after the campaign, the prospect of a second election if there is an inconclusive result, and the

which has created a list of 20,000 individual sponsors, a distinctly untraditional Labour business plan fund was set up in 1988 with the help of a £500,000 loan from the Unity Trust Bank.

That included a high value donors initiative that arranged Labour's well publicised £500-a-plate dinners in July 1991 and February 1992, and raised £250,000 through the Co-op Visa credit card plan. The high cost of administering these initiatives has con-

ing of £8 million, making this election the costliest in its history.

The Liberal Democrats have recovered well from their financial debacle of 1989, when heavy losses led to severe cuts at headquarters. A recovery of membership (to 92,000) has increased income and the party's deficit has been reduced to £250,000. The party has received two-thirds of its election target of £1.5 million, with promises for the rest.

PARTY EXPENDITURE

£ million

Lang rallies his troops

Tories urged to fight for the union

BY KERRY GILL

TORY parliamentary candidates throughout Scotland will receive a letter from Ian Lang, Scottish secretary, today urging them to champion the cause of the union and attack the twin threat of separatism and "the Trojan horse of devolution".

As he leads an assault on Labour's desire for constitutional change, Mr Lang will attack the party's plans for a tax-raising assembly, a theme the Tories plan to develop. The Scottish Tory team is expected to try to crank up its election campaign, which has been criticised for its inability to set the agenda.

Mr Lang's exhortation could not come too soon. The latest opinion poll by Mori for *The Sunday Times Scotland* yesterday indicated that the Tories' support had dwindled to 20 per cent, down three points on last week's Mori poll. Labour's support edged up a point, to 43 per cent and the Liberal Democrats fell two points, to 9 per cent.

The Scottish National Party rose three points to 27 per cent, its highest level according to Mori since Jim Sillars, the deputy leader, won the Govan by-election a little over two years ago. Mr Lang and his followers were able to take some comfort from the rise in support for the constitutional status quo, which was up three points to 23 per cent.

The constitutional issue, however, has fallen back as the public's greatest concern. Unemployment appears to be the main concern and one that could help the Tories. According to government figures published last week, for every 100 English people out of work there are 99 Scots people the first time since modern statistics began that the ratio has favoured Scotland.

Mr Lang will tell his supporters today: "Unemployment is down by around 100,000 over this parliament. For the first time the Scottish rate is below that for the United Kingdom as a whole. Our stronger, more diverse, economy is weathering the world recession and is ready to thrive on the upturn."

However, it is clear that the nationalists are the main challenger to Labour in Scot-

land, although they are still beset by the problem of translating the 34 per cent support for independence into votes for SNP candidates.

Alex Salmond, the party leader, has set a target of 40 per cent of the vote in the election, which if achieved would make the SNP the biggest party in Scotland. He said: "The poll shows that the SNP has succeeded in estab-

lishing a distinctive Scottish agenda in the first week of the election campaign. We have doubled our support since the last election. We will continue to gain momentum as this campaign develops."

Mr Salmond is trying to persuade the Scottish electorate of the similarity of the Tory and Labour programmes and points up the fears over unemployment under both parties. "The stark choice offered to Scotland is steadily worsening unemployment with the Tories, the same unacceptable level of current unemployment with Labour, and a positive programme to cut the numbers out of work from the SNP," he said.

Tonight the nationalists will screen a party political broadcast called *Scotland my Homeland*, which will launch their similarly titled anthem for an independent Scotland. The five-minute film, with a summing-up by the actor Sean Connery, will concentrate on Labour's failure to stop Tory policies being imposed on Scotland over the past 13 years. It will try to show the SNP as the party that has retained its idealism. After the first broadcast featuring Mr Connery, the SNP said that it received 2,000 calls enquiring about its policies.

The Tories remain happy to see the nationalists scrapping with Labour in the hope that the SNP will break into the Labour vote in marginal seats such as Stirling, Ayr and Edinburgh Pentlands. But it is a risky strategy since an upsurge in SNP support could topple Mr Lang in Galloway and Upper Nithdale, and lose Perth and Kinross, and Tayside North to the nationalists.



Leading light: A west Belfast voter taking John Hume by the arm at the weekend as the SDLP leader made a canvassing tour of the constituency.

Unionists decide stance for a hung parliament

BY EDWARD GORMAN
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

ULSTER Unionists are not exactly rubbing their hands together in excited anticipation, but the looming prospect of a hung parliament in which they might hold the balance of power is beginning to focus minds in Ulster.

At the weekend the normally taciturn Jim Molyneux told the annual meeting of the Ulster Unionist party council: "It is true that persons and parties have greatness thrust upon them. Such has been the fate of the Ulster Unionist party for the second time in this century."

He added that his party "will not shirk our responsibility to the union and the sovereignty of Parliament". Ian Paisley, the Democratic Unionist party leader with whom he would almost certainly act in concert in any post-electoral negotiations, said on Friday that he is relishing the prospect to advance his cause.

Mr Molyneux had nine MPs to Dr Paisley's three in the last Parliament. Separately or together they could support either of the main parties as part of a permanent coal-

ition or temporarily in the run-up to another general election, perhaps in the new year.

Mr Molyneux appears to have ruled out a coalition arrangement during the lifetime of the next Parliament. Instead, he is offering an informal arrangement whereby he would decide, "in the interests of the United Kingdom in general and of Northern Ireland in particular, whether at any time we should terminate the life of a new Parliament prematurely".

Some of his colleagues believe an understanding of this kind might evolve into a more permanent deal if a government - particularly a Labour government - decided that a second election would not be in its interests.

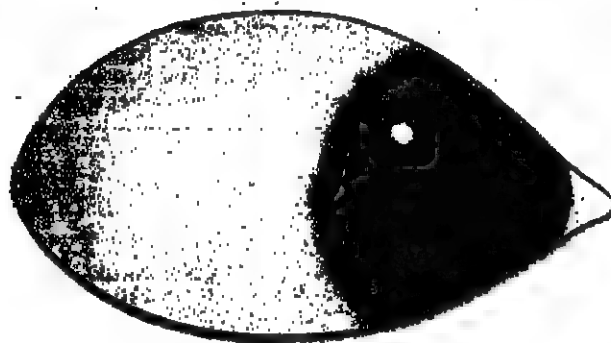
While Unionists have in theory a long shopping list of potential demands, the practice of political co-operation is likely to moderate the price of their support considerably.

Unionist MPs know that they would risk further alienating themselves from the mainstream of the British electorate if they were seen to have precipitated an unwant-

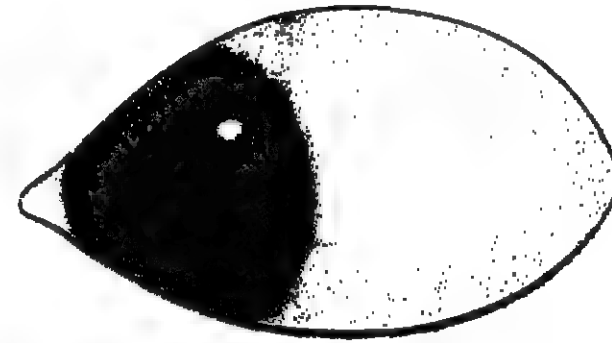
ed election. At the same time, any government will be aware that reorienting to any degree its agenda on Ireland to suit the Unionists will jeopardise Anglo-Irish relations and threaten the trust built up between the parties by Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary.

The two Unionist parties launch manifestos this week that are likely to outline in detail the price of their support. The UUP is likely to emphasise to an incoming prime minister that any new arrangements for regional government in the United Kingdom must obtain throughout on the same basis: there could be no question of treating Ulster differently from Wales, Scotland or the English regions.

Mr Paisley would add a particular emphasis on security (though the UUP might also ask for internment) and might push for some of the ideas he put to the prime minister in January, including the effective sealing of the border, an increase in army and police numbers, the introduction of identity cards and the creation of a part-time civilian force as a back-up to the police.



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Quay debate: Alex Salmond, SNP leader, meets two constituents in Macduff at the weekend

Ben Nevis campaign for campus

Sir Russell Johnston, the former Liberal Democrat MP who is fighting his ninth election campaign in 28 years, wants to set up a campus in the shadow of Ben Nevis.

It would be linked to a new university at Inverness, capital of his huge constituency, and would offer courses in agriculture, aquaculture and forestry.

Six-pack

Six candidates are expected to contest Conwy, the seat defended by Sir Wyn Roberts, minister of state for Wales. Owen Wainwright, aged 51, a hotelier, confirmed yesterday that he is standing as an independent conservative.

Wildlife lobby

The Sussex Wildlife Trust is asking voters to demand a ministry to protect the environment, suspension of the roads programme, "green" farm grants, action on the South-East drought, and more school nature studies.

Sainsbury rival

Tim Sainsbury, Conservative candidate for Hove, is likely to be challenged today by Nigel Furness, aged 42, a landscape gardener, who will hand in nomination papers as candidate for the Official Hove Conservative party.

Nationalist party tests candidates

THE Cornish nationalist party, Mebyon Kernow, is not fielding any candidates in the election but has told its members that there should be a change of government.

The 300-strong party has sent questionnaires to the candidates standing in the county's five constituencies

to try to find out who would best represent Cornwall's interests. After receiving the responses it will advise its supporters which candidate to vote for.

The party has decided against putting forward its own candidates because of the expense and the unlikelihood of winning a seat. Colin Lawry, a Mebyon Kernow county councillor, said: "Although we will be assessing the individual candidates, most people think politically that it is time for a change from the Tories. Cornwall has the worst unemployment that it has had for years and people think the government is responsible."

"We will encourage the Cornish people to participate fully in the coming election and to take every opportunity to ensure that the candidates of all parties are made aware of the importance of protecting the Cornish culture, community, economy and environment."

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Tatars defy Yeltsin and vote for independence from Russia



Shaimiyev: allayed fears of secession

THE authorities in Tatarstan, an oil-rich, racially mixed autonomous republic in the heart of Russia, reported a resounding "Yes" vote yesterday in a politically explosive referendum on independence. The result is seen in Moscow as a threat to the unity of the Russian Federation and could portend a serious political crisis for President Yeltsin, who is under pressure from hardliners in Moscow to treat Tatarstan, home of some of the giants of Soviet industry, with exemplary severity.

Preliminary results showed that just over 60 per cent of voters approved, and 37 per cent rejected, the idea of making the homeland of the Tatar people a "sovereign state" which would be "equal partner" in treaties with Russia and other countries. The figures were hailed by the local

Tatarstan's decision to go it alone may prove a catalyst in the desperate fight to prevent Russia from disintegration.
Bruce Clark reports from Kazan

leadership as a mandate to negotiate a special status within Russia. Mintimer Shaimiyev, Tatarstan's president, yesterday sought to allay fears that his mini-republic would secede from Russia and said that his first act would be to reaffirm and strengthen its ties with Moscow. "Our first step will be to announce a tighter union with Russia, to strengthen and intensify ties, to create new relations with a reformed Russia," Mr Shaimiyev said.

But nationalist activists of the Tatar community, which accounts for just under half the territory's 3.5 million

people, saw the results as a sign that independence was already guaranteed. "From now on, we will be good neighbours with Russia," said Murat Mulyukov, a leading nationalist, using a formula that was often heard in Lithuania when its independence struggle was starting three years ago.

President Yeltsin, who in a much quoted outburst before the referendum urged the people of Tatarstan to "take as much sovereignty as you like", is vulnerable to accusations that he is failing to prevent Russia from following the same disintegration

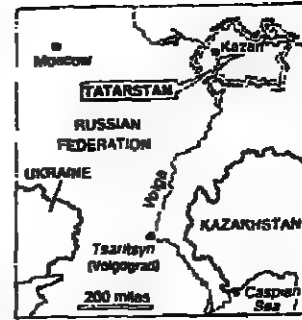
process that destroyed the Soviet Union. Aleksandr Lazovoy, the deputy chairman of Tatarstan's parliament, said the local leadership would seek a treaty with Russia giving it broad control over the economy which, apart from oil deposits accounting for about five per cent of Russia's output, also include vast aircraft and truck factories. Tatarstan's other demands would include the sole right to levy taxes and full control over the local police and judiciary. Only in certain designated areas, such as external defence, would Moscow continue to exercise any authority in the territory.

Russian politicians who came to monitor the election alleged that there had been widespread fraud and malpractice, including repeated attempts by the local police to

detain them on trumped up charges and thus prevent them from driving round polling stations. Aleksandr Lukin, a Moscow city councillor, said he believed that the real size of the "No" vote in Kazan had been around 59 per cent and not 51 per cent as the authorities were reporting. However, nationalist politicians countered that it was the Russian visitors who were guilty of malpractice by harassing and intimidating voters outside polling stations.

There was little outward sign of political tension in Kazan, a city of shabby elegance. While Russians attended Lent services, Tatars gathered in the marble Lenin Museum to celebrate the Muslim new year with a display of folk dancing.

The Tatar referendum comes just as Mr Yeltsin is grappling with the wider



question of keeping not only the Russian Federation together but also the Commonwealth of Independent States. In Kiev yesterday, President Kravchuk of Ukraine said the commonwealth was not working because none of its decisions were being carried out. He said the commonwealth, just 100 days old, had failed in both of its original aims — organising a "civilised divorce" between former

Soviet republics and creating a mechanism for solving common problems.

"The leading state of our commonwealth — Russia — is acting autonomously and all the others have to follow along behind, in step," Mr Kravchuk said. "This can never bring a positive result because it suppresses the interests of the other states."

Yerevan: Armenia swore in recruits to its new national army yesterday, the first concrete sign that it was matching similar moves by its neighbour, Azerbaijan.

The 120 conscripts, Kalashnikov rifles slung across their chests, swore individual oaths of allegiance to the Armenian flag and then marched across a parade ground singing patriotic songs of past battles and the war in Nagorno-Karabakh. (Reuters)

Albanians vote for a new era of recovery

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN ELBASAN, ALBANIA

AFTER an election campaign marred by sporadic violence Albania's 1.8 million voters went to the polls yesterday.

The loyalists of Europe's poorest people were divided between the ruling Socialist and the opposition Albanian Democratic party. But they were united in the hope that democracy, once securely installed, will bring a new chapter of stability and recovery to the country.

Albania's present economic plight — 70 per cent of people are out of work and severe shortages of food and basic goods — have created a frenzied and often violent climate in the run-up to voting. In the northern town of Shkoder a policeman who had worked for the Sigurimi, the communist regime's state security service, was shot dead on Saturday.

A bomb exploded at the weekend in the headquarters of the Democratic party in Gjirokastra in the south, the birth place of the late communist dictator Enver Hoxha. A policeman was also killed in the student quarter of the capital, Tirana.

Albanian television showed pictures of former members of the communist political

elite voting in prison where they are awaiting trial. But Nexhmije Hoxha, the widow of the dictator who ruled the country with an iron fist for 41 years, refused to cast her vote after being led from her cell to a polling station in Tirana prison.

She told election officials in the prison office: "I won't vote as a sign of protest. If my husband were alive he would understand the situation in Albania. He would have democratic reforms without poverty and violence. There was no poverty in our times, or not like this anyway. This is a protest because I am being unjustly imprisoned. My trial is being delayed."

Both the Socialists who have held the balance of power since last year's elections, and the opposition Democrats have campaigned on bringing an end to social disorder in the country and promoting foreign investment to restart its dormant industries. The Democrats are confident that they can get an absolute majority but admit that they are unsure of the peasant vote, particularly in outlying areas.

The village of Petresh, high in the mountains south of Tirana, has 243 adult residents, most of whom spent yesterday gathered outside the makeshift polling station. Inside, the head of the local council and two peasant women were guarding the ballot box. There were allegations of rigging in last March's elections. This year European Community observers believe that any large-scale manipulation has been ruled out by more careful preparation.

"The Albanian people are proud and dignified. We like to work the land and produce good crops," said Jalife Xhelili as he cast his vote. "Now we are the beggars of Europe. I will never pardon the communists for what they have made of our country."

Tirana night watch, page 14

German minority loses hope

Moscow: Leaders of about two million ethnic Germans in the former Soviet Union said after a three-day congress here that they had no choice but emigration.

A resolution declared: "The Russian leadership has effectively refused to restore the infringed rights of the [former Soviet] Germans. As a result, the hopes of the [German] people for a future on Russian territory have been totally destroyed."

In 1941 ethnic Germans were driven by Stalin from the territory on the Volga which they had inhabited since the 18th century and exiled, mainly to Kazakhstan and Kirghizia. The demise of communism had raised hopes of a return. (Reuters)

Russia pays up

Moscow: The Russian government approved a plan to pay up to 25,000 roubles (£147) per person to former political dissidents, who will also receive unspecified "privileges" after submitting applications. (AFP)

Arms seized

Tarragona: Security forces seized a cache of arms and explosives and detained a man in a raid against Basque separatists. Spanish radio said. Last week car bombs killed two people near Barcelona, northeast of here. (Reuters)

Honecker plea

Santiago: Enrique Silva Cimma, the Chilean foreign minister, has said that Erich Honecker, the former East German leader, should leave the Chilean embassy in Moscow to end a standoff between Chile and Germany. (Reuters)

Rioters held

Leipzig: German police detained 67 people after anarchists, many of them masked, hurled rocks and smashed car windows at an anti-racism demonstration here, slightly injuring 17 policemen. (Reuters)



Back to the future: Nurcan Eraslan, a nurse who survived eight days without food and water under the wreckage of a hospital in Erzurum devastated by an earthquake, being cared for in nearby Erzurum yesterday. She said she had come "back to life" after being rescued. Miss Eraslan, aged 22, was pulled from the rubble on Saturday in Erzurum in eastern Turkey. At least 485 people were killed. For eight days, she was

unable to move, according to Professor Bulent Alparslan, head of the Atatürk University hospital in Erzurum where she is being treated. Ms Eraslan had suffered life-threatening injuries but her condition improved yesterday, he said. She had apparently been conscious throughout her ordeal, but had suffered memory lapses on rescue. She had kidney damage and had been operated on for circulation problems in her legs,

which may have to be amputated. "I am back to life. An earthquake is a terrible thing. I never believed I would be rescued," Miss Eraslan told the Anadolu news agency from her bed in the hospital, where her family gathered and her father said he was "the happiest person in the world". Miss Eraslan had told rescue workers that two of her friends were still alive under the rubble. Rescue efforts have been resumed. (AP)

Electors defy the elements and pundits in French poll

FROM DENIS TAYLOR IN PARIS

FRENCH voters yesterday turned out in greater numbers than pessimists had thought to take part in regional elections, seen as a crucial test for the Socialists who have governed the country for the past decade.

An hour before the polls closed in the provinces, the interior ministry said that 55 per cent of the 35 million registered electors had voted in the regional and local elections. Voting in Paris, where polling stations stayed open later, was slower.

The morning weather forecast seemed appropriate for the party in power. It would be wet and squally practically everywhere, except for the cloudy south. Edith Cresson, the prime minister, whose continued tenure of that post is seen as very much in doubt, voted early in Châtelleraul.

She took her turn in a queue behind 20 other voters in a polling station in a school. Antoine Weacher, the Ecology party leader, sported a green scarf wrapped around his neck to add a touch of colour to rain-swept Mulhouse, in Alsace. Two polling stations in Corsica were briefly closed after bomb threats.

A total of 1,890 council members are due to be elected to the 22 regions of metropolitan France and four overseas departments. There is only one round for the regional elections, but a second round will be held next Sunday for the district elections.

Electors weary of the traditional parties had told opinion pollsters that they rated the Socialists little higher than the extremist National Front, led by Jean-Marie Le

Pen, which wants an end to immigration from North Africa. Disillusionment with the Socialist handling of the economy is widespread. As *Le Monde* put it: "It makes little difference if inflation has been brought under control, the trade deficit reduced, the health of the franc strengthened and, indeed, purchasing power maintained if the French only have eyes for the curve of unemployment." The figure is close to three million.

The government, which faces parliamentary elections next year, has attempted to switch the debate from issues such as the economy to the dangers posed by the Front. This has made sure that M Le Pen has received the highest possible profile, and alarm has been increased by the use of proportional representation in these elections.

Bush and Kohl near trade breakthrough

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON

HELMUT Kohl, the German chancellor, completed two days of talks with President Bush yesterday that may have laid the ground for a breakthrough in world trade negotiations.

Both leaders, who spent the weekend at Camp David, expressed optimism that the April 15 deadline for completing the six-year long negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade would be met despite the stalemate over European farm subsidies. Herr Kohl said: "I must say I think we have a good chance of an agreement."

His visit to America has been seen as a possible last opportunity for settling the disagreement between America and the European Community over European farm subsidies before the economic

summit of the Group of Seven most industrialised countries in July. According to a White House spokesman, the two leaders reviewed the thorny negotiations between America and the EC and "agreed to give them their full support with the aim of completing the round as soon as possible."

On his arrival in Washington on Friday, Herr Kohl played down the suggestion that he had come with specific proposals to break the logjam at the Geneva-based world trade talks. There had been reports in Bonn that he planned to lay out a compromise centred on linking the reduction of European subsidies with an American freeze on the export of livestock fodder to Europe. White House officials said such a compromise would be unacceptable.

Signora Mussolini woos land of her forefather



Stylish campaigner: Alessandra Mussolini is relying on her name to get her elected in Italy

With two weeks to go before the Italian general election, Alessandra Mussolini is confident that her name and the moral support of her aunt will ensure her a seat in parliament, though some hardline neo-Fascists may be disappointed to hear her relatively moderate views.

"People have been in tears wherever I have been, all over Italy," the granddaughter of Mussolini and candidate for the Italian Social Movement said yesterday at her headquarters in a fashionable Neapolitan hotel. "It has been really very beautiful. I have had so much satisfaction from meeting the people."

"It is a challenge to try and carry this name to parliament after 50 years," she said as her mother Maria Scicolone, a sister of Sophia Loren, hovered protectively nearby. Militants of her neo-Fascist party have passed up posters with her campaign slogan — "the flame returns" — everywhere along the Bay of Naples. Pamphlets show Signora Mussolini, aged 28, looking fetching in a short brown dress with plunging neckline.

She is sure she can take votes away from the dominant Christian Democrats, whose local leader, Antonio Gava, controls a formidable

The name and political aspirations of the Mussolini family are still revered in Naples, writes John Phillips

electoral machine. The climax of her campaign will include concerts by Romano Mussolini, her jazz pianist father. Her hope that Loren might join her campaign has been dashed but she is not overly disappointed. "Los Angeles is too far away. But she is very happy I am a candidate. She approves my choice. I have her moral support."

Signora Mussolini has taken the neo-Fascist platform of stiffer penalties against the Camorra, the Naples mafia, to young people in discotheques and nightclubs around the bay. However, she does not share the long-standing call by the movement to bring back the death penalty. "Anarchy reigns in Naples. Crime has become a state within the state. I am in favour of tougher prison sentences but in general I am against the death penalty. It could be used against too many innocent people."

Such relative moderation may be lost on some of the hardliners who turned out to see Signora Mussolini at a campaign meeting on the Naples seafloor yesterday. Sergio Maiocchi, a muscular-looking student, watched as police cars raced by with sirens wailing and said: "In Naples it is always like this. They go to arrest the assassins and one or two days later they let them out of jail. I want them put up against a wall and shot."

Luciano Chilippo, the owner of a small pasta factory in nearby Caserta, said his support for the Mussolini name went back to his father who took part in the 1922 March on Rome.

The movement won two of the 40 seats to the Chamber of Deputies in the Naples-Caserta constituency in the 1987 general election, polling about 200,000 votes. Party officials have high hopes that Signora Mussolini will give them at least a third seat. She admits her brief career as an actress and one time pin-up may be scant preparation for politics, but hopes her degree in medicine will help her to concentrate on the chaotic state of the Italian health service. "It is clear that I have to learn the trade. I will commit myself scientifically."

Keeping peace amid goats and gunfire

FROM TIM JUDAH IN DALJ, CROATIA

WITH goats grazing in the back courtyard and a Yugoslav armoured personnel carrier guarding the front, Jim Lubin sat back on his bed and said: "My children think I've gone mad."

Mr Lubin, a former proof-reader on *The Times* and later chief editor of the *United Nations Yearbook*, has come out of retirement to live in Dalj as the civilian head of one of the four UN peacekeeping zones in Yugoslavia. "It was early retirement of course," said Mr Lubin, who will next week spend his 56th birthday in this obscure village in Serbian-controlled eastern Croatia. "It's the most complex thing I've ever done." Mr Lubin, originally from Burton-on-Trent, has experience working with UN missions in Lebanon and Namibia. "I was on a skiing holiday when they called to offer me this."

The past week has been an exhausting round of negotiations. Mr Lubin and the other members of this UN reconnaissance mission have been preparing the way for the deployment of hundreds of UN peacekeeping troops whose local headquarters are to be in Dalj, 90 miles north-east of Belgrade. "We spent

Friday night over the front line in Osijek with the Croats thrashing out the exact boundaries of our sector," said Mr Lubin. "While we were talking there were explosions a hundred yards away. I can tell you that both sides have been very co-operative." A colleague muttered: "We've had to scream and shout like bloody hell."

UN committed itself to sending a 14,000-strong peacekeeping force to Croatia which is due to be fully deployed by the end of next month. But questions of authority, demilitarisation and the mechanics for the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees remain unresolved.

Belgrade: Parents placed at least 157 babies on the ground outside the office of President Milosevic of Serbia yesterday to protest against the soaring cost of raising children in Serbia. They gave each baby a nappy and a blanket, and then placed the children on the ground and stepped back.

When the babies began to cry the organiser, Dubravka Markovic, comforted them. "Don't worry, we won't really give you to Sloba," she said, using the president's nickname. (Reuters)

Russia

Hostilities in Cambodia

Khmer Rouge tightens net as UN builds peace force

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN KOMPONG THOM, CAMBODIA

A KHMER Rouge noose is tightening around this key strategic town in central Cambodia, birthplace of the notorious leader Pol Pot. Despite an official ceasefire, the provincial capital of Kompong Thom is under a kind of loose siege, with fighting only three miles from town. Shells dropped on the outskirts at the weekend, wounding several people.

The guerrillas are hitting roads running north and west of the town, population 43,000, and late last week tried to blow up a bridge on its one lifeline, Highway 6, running 100 miles south to Phnom Penh, the capital. "If the Khmer Rouge hold this area, they can control access to northern Cambodia and open the road to the east," said Colonel Chea Khemara, a liaison officer for one of two

non-communist factions opposed to the Phnom Penh government. He is attached to a small United Nations team here.

"The Khmer Rouge are trying to take as much land as they can before UN peace-keeping forces arrive here," said the provincial governor, Un Ning. The Khmer Rouge wanted infiltration routes into eastern Cambodia, he said.

"When they have land they have people, and they need to control people for the elections in 1993."

"This is a very strategic area," said an officer of the UN Transitional Authority. "It's the centre of the country and if you control the Kompong Thom area you control access to north, northeastern and eastern Cambodia."

With fighting, and intermittent shelling, going on most nights, residents in Kompong Thom are frightened. On several recent evenings, people fled across the river, blocking the town to take shelter in the built-up market area.

They ask when UN troops, whose mandate began on March 15, will deploy here. There is only a six-man monitoring team at present. A battalion of 800 Indonesian

airborne troops arrived in Phnom Penh last week but are not to be thrown into the fray before acclimatising, or before the present fighting halts. Kompong Thom is the only centre of serious hostilities in Cambodia, but the fighting represents the biggest violation of the ceasefire agreed in May last year.

"I spent a sleepless night," said Kim Nath, a schoolteacher, after shells exploded around his home on the outskirts. "Everyone is afraid." The shells had apparently been aimed at Un's Ning's provincial headquarters but fell short. A new bunker has been built in the grounds.

Bunkers in Kompong Thom had been demolished following the signing of the Paris peace accords last year. Now they are being redug. UN officials and Phnom Penh-based diplomats do not believe that the Khmer Rouge will try to capture Kompong Thom itself, given that the UN already has a presence here.



Brother ponders Pol Pot cruelty

BY JAMES PRINGLE

SURROUNDED by children and grandchildren, Saloth Nhep, the brother of Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge leader, was reflecting on why his brother became the cruel leader he had when Khmer Rouge shells exploded in Kompong Thom at the weekend, as if Pol Pot himself was sending a message.

"It's difficult to understand why he became such a monster," said Saloth Nhep, aged 65. "He was always so quiet, so sweet, like a lady. If I ever met him again, I would ask him why he carried out such cruelties."

Saloth Nhep bears an uncanny resemblance to Saloth Sar (Pol Pot) is a warm, friendly, and gentle man, aged 63, who is now based somewhere in mountains along the Thai-Cambodian border, and he still lives in the area where his brother was born and spent his youth.

It is 22 years this month since Cambodia was engulfed in war. Although the peace accords were signed last October, it was clear that this provincial capital should again be under attack by the Khmer Rouge. United Nations peace monitors and local officials said the rebels are all over the province, menacing its three access roads and seizing villages.

UN officers believe that Kompong Thom is important to the Khmer Rouge, not just for strategic reasons. Because this is Pol Pot's home town, it is viewed by the guerrillas with the veneration the Chinese communists once held for Shaoshan, Mao Tse-tung's birthplace.

The town is a frightened place, with an 8pm curfew. Traffic slows to a trickle before that. The only sound of life comes from the little restaurant next to UN headquarters, where three Australian signallers were playing their Western tapes. There are also three UN majors, an Algerian, a Tunisian and an Indonesian, but the Australians are more visible, a reassuring presence, going jogging before dusk and giving impromptu English lessons.

"Clearly we need a more developed presence at Kompong Thom," said Lieutenant-General John Sanderson, military commander of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia. "Exactly what that will be depends on the outcome of negotiations with the factions, including the Khmer Rouge."

In the past two weeks, however, they have blown up three bridges on Highway 12, leading due north, cutting off access by Phnom Penh government forces to positions around Preah Vihear, on the Thai border. On Highway 6 leading west, the Khmer Rouge have launched attacks around Stung, with the guerrillas controlling parts of the road by night.

The route to Phnom Penh looks vulnerable with Khmer Rouge forces operating south of Kompong Thom, and most vehicular traffic on the road is military. There is little security on the last 12 miles into town as found when making the drive. Government forces are non-existent perhaps because most are deployed on the northern and western approaches to Kompong Thom.



Sticky wicket: P. V. Narasimha Rao, India's prime minister, batting in a friendly match between MPs in Delhi. He made no runs in a field ringed by security men

Burma bolsters border troops

FROM AHMED FAZI IN DELHI

BURMA has reinforced its troops stationed along its border with Bangladesh, deploying artillery on mountains overlooking the tense frontier where thousands of refugees have taken shelter.

Bangladesh defence sources said yesterday that ten mechanised battalions were moved last week in the Arakan province to less than two miles from the 170-mile border. Long-range field guns were placed on mountains in the Buchidong and Maungdaw, military strongholds seven miles from the Bangladesh border town of Teknaf, which has given shelter to almost half of the 200,000 Muslim refugees who fled Arakan alleging a systematic reign of terror by the Buddhist Burmese army.

Burma has said that the build-up is to contain Muslim separatist rebels. Bangladesh has responded by alerting its border forces. It opened three more refugee camps at the weekend, making a total of 11. The Bengali language daily, *Ittefaq*, said yesterday that Burmese soldiers intercepted three fishing trawlers carrying Muslim refugees on the Naaf river and arrested about a hundred youths. Another Bengali daily, *Inqilab*, said the number of refugees arriving daily in Bangladesh had declined suddenly from more than 5,000 to 3,000.

Thailand poll leaves future uncertain

FROM NEIL KELLY IN BANGKOK

In the first electoral test since the military coup 13 months ago, voters in Thailand's general election yesterday gave no party an overall majority and left the country with an uncertain political future. The nature of the new coalition government and the identity of the incoming prime minister may not be known for days.

Unofficial results last night showed that political parties with close links to the armed forces were neck and neck with those who want the military to withdraw from politics. Some of the smaller parties will have a decisive voice in forming the new government.

The results show how divided the Thai people are on the key question of the election, namely who should run the country - elected politicians or a military answerable to nobody. Opinion polls have disclosed widespread hostility to a non-elected military prime minister, but some of the political parties would accept the appointment. The prime minister does not

According to unofficial results, main parties won seats in the 360-member parliament as follows:

Samakkhi Tham (pro)	77
Naft Aspiration (anti)	72
Chart Thai (pro)	70
Pakung Dharma (anti)	44
Democrat (anti)	44
Social Action (pro)	29
Others	24

() denotes pro or anti-military parties

Suchinda Kraprayoon, the armed forces chief, to be prime minister as no party has won an overall majority. There have been warnings that the appointment could provoke violent reaction. Students and other pro-democracy groups say they are ready to take to the streets in protest. Chamlong Srimuang, a retired major-general who is the most respected of the party leaders, said it could cause disturbances on the scale of 20 years ago, when there was heavy loss of life in a rebellion against army rule.

According to opinion polls, the Thais would prefer to have General Chamlong, a former Bangkok governor, as prime minister. His party won almost all the seats in Bangkok but few elsewhere. General Chamlong could play a significant role in the formation of the new government, however.

The membership of the new senate announced after polling ended increased suspicion of the military leaders, who appointed the senators as they were empowered to under the constitution. Most of the senators are military and police officers or civil servants and businessmen sympathetic to the armed forces. The senators have enough power in collaboration with a few MPs in the lower house to remove any government the military leaders do not like.

Among those re-elected yesterday were several former cabinet ministers who had their assets seized by the military after being found guilty of corruption. The military leaders cited government corruption as justification for last year's coup.

Pretoria to resume hangings

Johannesburg: Seventeen criminals are to be hanged in South Africa, the justice ministry said yesterday. The last execution took place in 1989.

Werner Krull, a ministry spokesman, said all appeal procedures including clemency pleas to President de Klerk had been exhausted and the executions would be carried out "in due course". There were 310 people on death row.

He said he had no information on the race of those to be hanged, "but you can safely assume from the composition of people on death row that there are a mixture of races among the 17". In the 1980s, South Africa had one of the highest execution rates in the world. (Reuters)

China rues failure of space shot

FROM CATHERINE SAMMON IN BEIJING

CHINA'S space industry was left shame-faced yesterday after the attempted launch of an American-made satellite into orbit left the carrier rocket and its cargo still firmly on the ground.

With officials confident of success, the event was given nationwide television exposure in a live broadcast from the launch site at Xichang, deep in the hills of Sichuan Province, west China. As the countdown reached zero, the Long March 2E rocket was enveloped in red smoke and flames licked its base. But the rocket did not move.

The television commentary fell silent and pictures showed shocked faces in the control room. Eventually, the commentator said that there had been "some difficulties" and an official explained that "in scientific endeavours, failure is unavoidable but temporary; we express our regret". Soon afterwards, the broadcast was cut short.

For several hours afterwards, Chinese television and Xinhua news agency were silent on the incident. The abortive launch represents a setback for the space industry, which has become a focus of national pride, often cited by Peking as proof that science and technology have reached international standards.

Western hopes fade for Libya sanctions

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN TUNIS

HOPES that workable sanctions can be imposed to persuade Libya to hand over the two men suspected of the Lockerbie bombing faded last night as Arab League foreign ministers pledged solidarity with Tripoli.

Western diplomats believe that if Arab states fail to honour sanctions, they could provide a back door into Libya, which would leave America and Britain with few options short of force to win Libya's compliance.

The United Nations Security Council is expected to put sanctions to the vote this week. A draft resolution prepared by Britain, America and France proposes severing air links with Libya, banning arms sales and reducing the numbers of Libyan diplomats abroad.

The 21-member Arab League called for a delay of the vote to allow further mediation. "We hope everyone will restrain themselves and not take hasty measures which could increase tension in our region when it is in dire need of stability," said the league's secretary-general, Esmat Abdel-Maguid. He was speaking in Cairo at a well-attended emergency session called by Libya.

The league wants the sanctions vote delayed at least until the International Court of Justice rules on whether Libya should hand over the

two suspects. It considers the case on Thursday but a ruling is likely to take time and western diplomats suspect a further Libyan delaying tactic.

There were signs that the new Arab order resulting from the Gulf war was close to collapse. From moderate Egypt to radical Iraq the west was accused in the state-controlled media and from angry voices on the street of pursuing double standards in its enforcement of United Nations resolutions against Iraq and Libya after years of failing to press those against Israel.

"The Gulf war was, for many in the west, a triumph for international law," claimed Hussein Ahmed Amin, a leading commentator in the Cairo daily *Al-Ahram*. "For many Arabs, it was a stark reminder of western double standards."

Last week, Dr Abdel Maguid said Arab countries were unlikely to enforce sanctions. Libya was also encouraged by clear statements from Egypt and Syria - the key Arab components in the coalition that ousted Iraqi forces from Kuwait - that they opposed sanctions. Libya presented a draft resolution to the league calling on the security council "to end the crisis through negotiation, mediation and legal settlements".

US sceptical as Scud hunt starts

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE search for Iraq's missing Scud missiles by a 35-man United Nations team began yesterday after Baghdad released further information about their weapon stocks. Officials in Washington remained sceptical, however, that Iraq was telling the whole truth.

Having experienced months of half-truths, evasions and deception by the Iraqi authorities, the team was being cautious about the prospects of finding and destroying every Scud. But with the threat of renewed military action by the Americans and British, there was some optimism that Baghdad was at last complying. In Washington, Robert Gates, director of the CIA, cast doubt on Iraqi claims that many missing Scuds were destroyed without UN supervision. "Given their record, we are going to have to look very carefully at what they say and ... do," he said.

In a letter last Friday to Rolf Ekeus, head of the UN commission set up to oversee the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, Baghdad said it was willing to disclose its arms programmes and accounted for previously undeclared missiles and chemical warheads. So far the UN teams have destroyed 62 Scud missiles. However, it is known that Iraq obtained more than 800

Scuds from the former Soviet Union, and many are still unaccounted for.

Mr Ekeus described the letter as a change of policy. Once he felt that UN inspectors knew enough about the weapons programmes he would recommend the easing of UN sanctions against Iraq.

The team also received Iraqi proposals for destroying missile production and repair facilities. Previously Iraq had insisted on keeping the plants for civilian use or for making short-range missiles. Diplomatic sources warned that a comprehensive disclosure on all systems was still needed, plus acceptance of long-term monitoring.

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Actor dies



Santa Barbara: John Ireland, above, the Canadian actor appearing in the film *All the King's Men* for which he received an Oscar nomination, died of leukaemia at the weekend. He was 78. (Reuters)

Embassy arrests

Buenos Aires: Four men and a woman were arrested in connection with the bombing of the Israeli embassy in which at least 28 people died and more than 220 were injured, the news agency Telam reported. (AP)

Minister fired

Brasilia: President Collor de Mello dismissed Jose Lutzenberger, the environment secretary whose speeches against Amazon destruction delighted conservationists abroad but made him enemies inside Brazil. (Reuters)

Killer father

Sullivan, Missouri: A county commissioner, aged 55, killed his wife, son, daughter and two grandchildren with a 12-gauge shotgun at his home, apparently as they slept, and then shot himself, police said. (Reuters)

Defence cuts bode ill in Connecticut

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN GROTON, CONNECTICUT

IT IS 6.45 on a brilliant icy morning. The street is lined with vans selling rolls and coffee, and the first of 16,000 workers are streaming through the gates into a vast jumble of offices and sheds sloping down to the estuary opposite New London. This is General Dynamics' Electric Boat division, the core of America's nuclear submarine industry. On the water's edge is the rust-red shell of the USS Nebraska, a nearly-finished Trident.

Mel Olsson, president of the local Marine Draftsmen's Association, says bitterly: "When they started talking about the peace dividend, they certainly didn't take us into consideration." Electric Boat has been building submarines in Groton since 1924. During the Cold War it produced 96 nuclear subma-

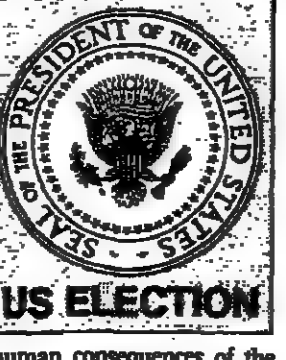
rines of 15 different classes. Then the Soviet threat disappeared. In January, President Bush cancelled Sea Wolf, the next generation of attack submarines, including two of the \$2 billion (\$1.2 billion) craft already ordered. The consequences for Electric Boat and this corner of New England could be ruinous.

Lay-offs have begun. Catharine Kohnaski, the mayor of Groton, said that if the yard had to close, "I just don't know how Groton would survive." In New London county, covering southeastern Connecticut, about 27,000 jobs would be lost out of a total workforce of 125,000. Statewide 65 of Electric Boat's 100 biggest suppliers and subcontractors would face probable closure, threatening another 10,000 jobs.

What is happening in Con-

necticut is happening across America. Defence spending is projected to fall from \$287 billion last year to between \$218 and \$235 billion by 1995. Huge programmes such as the B-2 Stealth bomber are being abandoned. Prominent projects are being frozen after the research and development stage. Tens of thousands of highly-skilled workers are being laid off.

What is really awkward for Mr Bush is that key states like New York, Texas and California are the hardest hit. Cutting defence could, in a close contest, cost the Republicans the first post-Cold War election. Bill Clinton, the Democrats' probable nominee, is exploiting the president's discomfort, advocating a five-year peace dividend far greater than Mr Bush has proposed while deploring the



US ELECTION

human consequences of the Republican cuts.

Clinton claims: According to the magazine *US News and Views*, Mr Bush's campaign managers are investigating claims that Mr Clinton, the governor of Arkansas, is linked with a chicken-producing firm which is polluting the state with "tons of faeces from poultry" and has "gone largely unregulated" by Clinton's administration. Mr Clinton has denied the claims.

Nixon's advice fails to dent Buchanan ardour

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON

IGNORING advice from Richard Nixon, the former president, Patrick Buchanan vowed at the weekend to stay in the presidential race and continue his fight for the soul of the Republican party in the California primary in June.

Mr Buchanan, who once served as a White House speech-writer for Mr Nixon, said that the former president had advised him to withdraw to avoid splitting the party. Speaking after his meeting with Mr Nixon, Mr Buchanan said: "I respect his opinion and respect what he had to say." The meeting was good-natured, with Mr Nixon contributing a five-rouble note to Mr Buchanan's campaign fund.

Later, Mr Buchanan told a rally in Connecticut that his

campaign was helping to stiffen the president's conservative spine and was forcing him to respond favourably to some positions held dear by the conservative wing of the Republican party. "We're winning one battle after another and that's why we'll keep this rolling."

However, it is understood that Mr Buchanan accepted Mr Nixon's advice to focus his campaign now on Bill Clinton, the front-runner for the Democratic nomination. Birmingham's George Wallace, Alabama's former segregationist governor, is in intensive care and breathing with the help of a respirator. He was admitted to hospital with pains linked to injuries sustained during an assassination attempt two decades ago. (Reuters)

Director robbed of heirlooms

Adrian Lyne, the film director who made the blockbuster *Fatal Attraction* and *Over the Top*, has lost his family inheritance after a £10,000 raid on his aunt's country home. Burglars stole silverware, china and jewellery from the home of Dorinda Lyne at Hordean, Hampshire.

Tough guy film star Bob Hoskins has revealed he is to team up with Phil Collins and Danny DeVito in a screen version of *The Three Bears*. Hoskins, aged 49, opens in Britain soon as Bosun Smees opposite Dustin Hoffman in Steven Spielberg's latest film *Hook*, a film version of *Peter Pan*, but the new project could be Hoskins' most bizarre to date. "I think I'm playing Auntie Bear," he said.

Anthony Quinn says he visited the trial of reputed mobster John Gotti "because I want to make a picture about this drama". He wants to portray former Gambino boss Paul Castellano. Gotti is accused of ordering Castellano's slaying.

Jack Nicholson, in costume as Jimmy Hoffa, signed autographs and puffed cigarettes while wrapping up a film on the late Teamsters leader.

Ivette Rodriguez couldn't make it in New York as a Latin. Now the Puerto Rican singer-actress is enthralling audiences at home with a hauntingly precise portrayal of Edith Piaf.

A lesson from Mr Reagan

John Major is belatedly learning the art of positivity, says Peter Riddell

RIDDELL ON THE ELECTION

John Major at last showed yesterday why he wants to remain prime minister, and what he wants to do with a fourth Tory term. Maybe it was the weekend opinion polls and the criticism in the Tory press. Maybe it was the presence alongside him at a rally of Conservative candidates of Margaret Thatcher — or Margaret, as Mr Major and Chris Patten somewhat uncomfortably referred to her (as she used to talk about Winston). Whatever the reason, Mr Major gave a sense of direction to the Tory campaign.

The Tories' difficulties so far in the campaign have had little to do with tactics or presentation — the design of the set at Mr Major's evening performances. Andrew Lloyd Webber's portentous campaign ditty, or whether, in what have become the clichés of the moment, the "dogs of war" are unleashed and the "gloves are taken off". Campaign nuances that obsess the party staffs make very little impact on most voters.

What matters are the strategy and broad campaign themes. All the polling evidence shows that voters respond to a party, and a leader, that know where they are going. Over the weekend I looked up the campaign passages in Lou Cannon's absorbing biography of Ronald Reagan. For all his many limitations, Mr Reagan attracted voters by exuding a sense of warmth and of optimism, of being positive rather than negative. This was similar to, and in some respect modelled on, Franklin Roosevelt's appeal in the 1930s. Even if times are hard, voters like to believe that politicians have not given up hope, that they have some answer. It was the impression of helplessness that Herbert Hoover gave, as much as what he did or did not do, that made him so vulnerable to Roosevelt in 1932.

Feel-good politics can be vacuous, as was much of Mr Reagan's Morning in America re-election theme of 1984. But self-confidence and direction are vital to electoral success. That is what Mrs Thatcher achieved in 1979, 1983 and 1987, and demonstrated in her rumbustious speech yesterday. It is also what Labour has done so far in this campaign. Labour has presented itself as ready for government, with a clear programme to take Britain out of recession and to tackle the shortcomings of public services. No matter that there are many contradictions in Labour's proposals, the party has created a momentum which has until now deflected criticism.

By contrast, much of the early Conservative propaganda has been aimed at Labour, at the impact of the latter's tax and spending proposals. These are legitimate questions, but they have been on the Opposition's ground. Comparisons are, of course, at the heart of elections, but the Tories have until this weekend not really given a positive reason why they should remain in office, as op-

posed to why Labour should be kept out of office. Senior Tories have treated Labour proposals with shocked disapproval for their alleged irresponsibility rather than recognising their electoral appeal. Ministers have behaved as if they, rather than Labour, were the challengers. Mr Major has at times, as in yesterday's rambling Brian Walden interview, appeared less commanding and prime ministerial than Neil Kinnock, who seems to have taken lessons from Lord Callaghan on how to convey the aura of office.

Admittedly, the Tories have a hard job defending quite a lot of their own recent record, while all their years in office have constrained their own thinking. The Conservative manifesto is, for instance, not a bad document; there are interesting ideas on widening choice and broadening ownership. But, with rare exceptions such as reducing official secrecy, there is a stamp of "Whitehall approved" throughout. You can tell that all pledges went through the Downing Street policy unit and costing by the Treasury. There is the tone of slightly prim respectability of the citizen's charter and all the mini-charters.

Mr Major remedied some of these deficiencies yesterday. Not only did he develop greater aggressiveness against Labour — which he needs to watch since his tendency towards stridency may undermine his personal popularity — but more importantly he attempted to justify a Tory fourth term, to present a more positive view of a Tory Britain in the 1990s. Mr Major talked of building on the record of the past 13 years by widening choice and improving the quality of public services.

The Tories have not so far secured the advantage they expected on tax, partly because the number of people hard hit by John Smith's proposals may be a relatively small slice of the electorate. But Mr Major's emphasis yesterday could have a wider appeal. He talked of the choice between "a country in which it pays to be ambitious, in which it pays to be qualified, in which it pays to work hard, or to be self-employed. Or a country in which incentive is abandoned, a hands-in-pockets Britain where you can only go so far before a Labour Chancellor is at your throat."

If Mr Major can present the Tories as the allies of the upwardly mobile and the ambitious, he could still win back sufficient wavering former supporters. But for all yesterday's activities, the Tories have not yet seriously disturbed Labour's self-confidence and momentum.

Anne McElvoy on the constant communists lurking in the shadows of Albania's election

Tirana's night watch

There is a newspaper in Tirana called *The Voice of Truth*. Its editor, Dhimitër Shembari, can be found in an unheated backroom of the headquarters of the Socialist party of Albania. He is seldom busy and will gladly recount the articles he intends to include this week. *The Truth* is an Albanian speciality: the newspaper that never appears. The printworkers refuse to handle it and return the articles every week.

It is the last remaining organ of Albanian communism, now that the invitingly titled *Sweet of the Peasants* has disappeared from news-stands. Mr Shembari is one of a dwindling but dogged bunch of Albanians still loyal to the memory of the former dictator Enver Hoxha, who ruled for 41 years until his death in 1985, pursuing a brand of Stalinist isolationism that has left his country in an economic wilderness and failing to cope with the transition to open society.

Tirana's once omnipotent communists have been relegated to the status of social lepers in the past year. Hoxha's huge statue has been toppled in the capital's main square, leaving only a pair of giant footprints behind. Drummed out

of their luxury residences, two members of the former politburo have been forced by the housing shortage to move their families in together and share their home with former political prisoners: a retribution that could perhaps be tried elsewhere in Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The museum in the dictator's honour was desecrated last year when a group of mischievous students used it as a discotheque. It is now hosting a furniture exhibition. Teams of workers have been demolishing the old exhibits but Hoxha's first car — a Seat in which he drove triumphantly through Tirana in 1944 — has proved impractical to move.

Mr Shembari shook his head at the short-sightedness of his countrymen. "Enver Hoxha was the greatest Albanian of all time," he said. "He was a friend to all working people and particularly fond of the British proletariat." The Great Leader, he explained, had actually been opposed to the

personality cult. Indeed he had scuppered initial plans for his statue in Skanderbeg Square which showed him surrounded by adoring peasants. He told the sculptor to save bronze and leave out the peasants.

Where most of Eastern Europe's diehard communists now modestly insist they were on the road to Utopia when their march was interrupted by Gorbachev's deviation or the West's dastardly intervention, Albania's loyal communists believe they had established a godless Eden only to be rudely evicted by the false dawn of democracy. "We had a surplus of vegetables and no queues then. Now we have chaos and poverty," said Mr Shembari.

Our interpreter, a clever and usually circumspect young woman, could stand no more and exploded that there had been queues for food in Albania as far back as she could ever remember. We were both grateful when we could finally flee the maze of lies.

While the old Communist party is no longer a force in Albanian politics, its influence lives on in the army and sections of the Socialist party. At the latter's pre-election rally, the entire hall swung to its feet and applauded in a steady, deafening rhythm every time the word "socialism" was mentioned. The greatest Albanian who ever lived would have felt at home.

The more progressive Democrats also tend towards cultish adoration of their leader, Sali Berisha, admittedly a man of intelligence and integrity. The new government that he looks likely to lead after yesterday's election has a plethora of unenviable tasks before it. It must restore order to the lawless streets, reconstruct an economy that has ceased to function, and spin a social net against dire poverty out of almost no resources.

The new administration must also find a way of dealing with the past that is purgative of old influences but does not whip up

violent sentiments of revenge. While the Socialists are caught up in the web of the past, sections of the Democrats display a bloodlust that if unchecked could lead to more chaos and misery.

It is now high time for the country's president, Ramiz Alia, to go, perhaps with the retiring present of the award for the most blatant turncoat survivor of the ousted regimes in Eastern Europe. Mr Alia was a puppet president and craven eulogist of Hoxha and succeeded him as leader. Last year he managed a seamless transition to the post of head of state in the emerging democracy. He found it impossible to address his people in any other tone than that of vainglorious hectoring, simply substituting the word "democracy" for "communism" in overblown and often nonsensical speeches. Proud, desperate Albania deserves a better representative than this as it embarks on the stormy road to Europe.

Mr Shembari, meanwhile, had to rush. After all, he had a non-existent newspaper to run. "I have changed some of my thinking about communism," he finally admitted. "Next time it might come to Britain before Albania."

Bernard Levin in California

observes the latest excess of a legal system gone mad

I used to be the fashion, one that may be returning in this election, that newspapers canvassed men and women prominent in fields other than politics, asking how they would vote, and why; it was deemed interesting to know how these apparently uncommitted figures would commit themselves on polling day. One reply has remained in my mind: it was from Evelyn Waugh, at his dotage, and he replied (I quote from memory, but I am sure of the gist): "I would think it an impertinence to offer advice to my Sovereign in her choice of government."

That is rather like the situation I find myself in now. I am in most generous and comfortable hands (and beautiful surroundings), but in California, a place which does tend somewhat to distort reality; moreover, my host is seeking election to Congress, which distorts sanity, never mind reality. All things considered, I would be delighted to miss our election campaign entirely, and simultaneously to flee from the even greater lunacies of the American system. A compromise: I shall stay in California, comment on neither election, and come back in time to vote. Until then, if you want a rest from the parties and their nostrums, you may seek sanctuary in this space on Mondays and Thursdays, as of yore.

When I want to annoy Californians, I draw their attention to the fact that in the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* California is clearly depicted as an island. When I want to increase the annoyance and widen its scope, I ask why American newspapers are all terrible. They don't, mostly, behave like our beastly tabloids, but even from those they



could learn about layout, headline, intelligible compression and what a newspaper is. (It is certainly not *The Los Angeles Times*, which appeared yesterday with a front-page headline reading *Mobs Threaten to Ravage Lands in North-West*.)

Desperately short of humour, page after page doing nothing but roll out acres of grey columns, not one tenth of which does one tenth of the readership glance at — this is what lack of competition does for a press. Alas, it is unimaginably rare — perhaps unique — to find a town with more than one serious but sensible paper, and it is unimaginably common to find towns with a paper that is neither serious nor sensible.

But no newspaper, however poor, could miss the story of Clarence Chance and Benny Powell, which for some time convinced me that Lord Lane, Donaldson and Bridge had been visiting the United States at the relevant time

and had been shown the courtesy of the American bench by their opposite numbers; what else, I mused, could explain the fact that Mr Chance and Mr Powell, having been fitted up by crooked policemen, who were then believed by the judges, had each spent 17 years in jail until somebody — right outside the legal system — noticed that they were both entirely innocent, and pointed out the fact to the authorities, who took the point and hastily let them out.

Now it is generally agreed that American law is not as other nations' law. For instance, if you think that our libel laws, which invite any crook to dive into the brain-tub and come out smelling of hundreds of thousands of pounds, are a little extravagant, you should see the American system of compensation; a twisted ankle can deliver a quarter of a million smackers, and a leer at a not very respectable woman twice that. But I think we would have to go very

far indeed to match the story of Patrick Hinrichsen and what happened to him, together with Mr Hinrichsen's mother and sister.

Mr Hinrichsen lived for many years with another man, a Mr Robert Saari; as far as the information goes, it was a most respectable and devoted relationship. In the fullness of time, Mr Saari died, and Mr Hinrichsen arranged for his cremation, with the ashes to be scattered at sea. So far, so good; Mr Hinrichsen was doubtless heartbroken, but he did this last loving duty for his companion. But by some mistake or failure in communications (certainly it seems there was no malice or deliberate disrespect involved), the burial at sea was accompanied by a Christian service. Neither Mr Saari nor Mr Hinrichsen was a Christian, and neither wanted such ministrations at their obsequies.

Whereupon, and thereupon, Mr Hinrichsen, his mother and sister, sued the burial society for "emo-

tional distress", and collectively collected \$242,500 for the said distress. The defendants took a curious line: they argued that because Mr Saari was not related to Mr Hinrichsen he was not entitled to damages for the dreadful experience of listening to some daft old geezer saying things like "I am the Resurrection and the Life..."

The court ruled (upheld on appeal) that Mr Hinrichsen's relationship, though it had not been solemnised in a formal and binding marriage (I think you can get such marriages in California, and I have no doubt at all that whoever does the splicing is careful — or now will be — to listen carefully for instructions as to the happy pair's denomination), was close enough for compensation. The defendants fell back on the quantum of damages, holding that a quarter of a million greenbacks, for being told that we brought nothing into this world and it is certain that we can carry nothing out, would be a trifle on the generous side. No dice; chap, mother and sister carved the joint, in what exact proportions history does not reveal, and were left alone with their emotional distress and their money.

"Emotional distress" has presumably existed since human beings became fond of each other and were bereaved, dismayed, shocked, pained and sympathised with: the term is a fairly recent one, and its appearance in our courts much more recent. There are those — I am emphatically one of them — who think that to pay monetary awards for emotional distress is a shameful and even disgusting practice. Since the human race existed it has suffered, and much of that suffering has been through seeing loved ones suffer. But only when greed and the law joined hands was the concept created.

To see a loved one die assuredly gives rise to emotional distress; to watch the burial of a loved one can also cause truly painful feelings. We can argue at leisure as to whether those feelings should be paid for. But to demand — and get — a quarter of a million dollars for seeing a Christian burial over an agnostic testifies to nothing but the depths to which American jurisprudence has fallen.



...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

At the weekend, HarperCollins took out a full page in *The Times* Saturday Review to advertise a new novel by Robert Ludlum, *The Road to Omaha*. It was not the book, however, but something else emblazoned across the page that caught my eye: beside a picture of Ludlum's earlier novel (*The Road to Gandolfo*) appeared the publisher's description of his latest offering: "Available in paperback." It said, "grab it now! The sensational prequel."

Prequel. Ah. Am I entirely sure what a prequel is? I toyed with the idea that it might be a new seasickness pill to be taken a week before embarking... a friend intervened: "Don't you see," she said, "*The Road to Gandolfo* has been a bestseller. Ludlum has obviously decided to write a follow-up. But instead of writing a sequel..."

Aha! My laser-like intellect shot ahead of her argument. So a prequel is a story about what happened before the story you've already read? What a good idea! Much existing literature begins to fall into place. I seem to remember from Sunday school days with my instructress, Miss Silk, that what we called "the Bible" was, for at least the first year of infant learning, only the Gospels. Miss Silk missed her window of promotional opportunity. Instead of offering us new Sunday school stamps to stick into our booklets each time we returned for another week's lesson, she should have waited

until we were seven, then announced to her class: "Now, children, you've read *The New Testament*. Now comes the sensational prequel, *The Old Testament*. Grab it now!"

And what about *The Old Testament* — the prequel? It did the Almighty occupy Himself before Genesis? "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth," begins the question. The beginning of the heaven and the earth, by definition, is a tautology. But what went before?

And what went before *Robinson Crusoe*? This never called for a sequel: but where Defoe does leave us in the air is over Man Friday. Where was he born? What is known of his early family life? How did he come to be putting his footprint there when he did? *Man Friday* — the prequel is overdue.

Thornton Wilder exploited the idea wonderfully within the covers of a single book in 1927. *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* is my favourite modern novel. It starts with the denouement... "On Friday noon, July Twentieth 1714, the finest bridge in all Peru broke and precipitated five travellers into the gulf below." And that really is *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* — the novel. The rest is the prequel. Wilder traces the life of each traveller, strangers to each other, from birth to that catastrophic coincidence.

They should do the same with *Blind Date*. I am much more interested in how the contestants have come to be on the thing in the first place than in

whether they enjoy their subsequent weekend together on the Isle of Man.

Or take *The Three Little Pigs*. Myself, I was always troubled by this curious tale. You will remember that the Pig in the brick house survived, but the Pig in the straw house perished after the Wolf began to huff and to puff and to blow his house down. After a good deal more huffing and puffing, the Pig in the wooden house suffered a similar fate. We know where we stand. Two dead pigs, one live one. Two down, one to go. Mild interest, certainly, in a sequel.

But what about the prequel? That is what really troubled me as a child. What were the pigs doing in such remarkable houses in the first place? Why did each live alone? Why did one end up in a straw house, while each of the others seems to have chosen such different building materials? How long had they been installed before the Wolf launched his novel form of respiratory assault? Where had he found their addresses? Three pigs in three houses: one wolf in the know, huff, puff, high noon... There is a classical symmetry here: the elements of the drama are beautifully poised, the scene set for the final act. *The Three Little Pigs* actually starts at what should be the beginning of the last chapter of the novel.

But what about the preceding chapters? *The Three Little Pigs* — the prequel. Now that's the novel I shall be looking for in next week's Saturday Review.

Eastern approaches

AS CANDIDATES from the ranks of the great and good jostle to succeed Lord Wilson as governor of Hong Kong the Diary can reveal the name of the man who will be Britain's first representative in the colony after it returns to Chinese control in 1997.

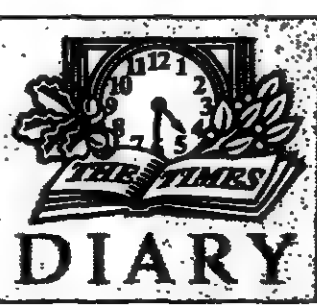
Stephen Day, aged 54, who has been ambassador in Tunisia for the past four years, will become consul general when the Union Jack is taken down for the last time. "The job is unique in diplomatic terms as far as I know," he says.

To prepare Day for his delicate posting, in which he will act under the sway of the British embassy 1,200 miles away in Peking, he will first be appointed senior British trade commissioner in the colony.

Day looks to have the right diplomatic credentials for his challenging job. In Tunis he has been Whitehall's main conduit to Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, whom he meets regularly. When William Waldegrave, then a junior Foreign Office minister, met Arafat in Tunis in 1989 it was Day who suggested that as a gift he should take honey from the embassy beehives, knowing that the PLO chief sweetens his tea with the stuff.

Of his early days as a diplomat he writes: "My wife and I spent our early years in a mud fort in the Aden protectorate: bits fell off when it rained and the white ants kept us awake as they chomped throughout the rafters. Our first child spent her nights in a sand bag bunker for protection against mortar and rocket attack."

Day is a keen amateur historian who has also served in New York



and Canada. In Hong Kong, he will eventually operate from a new British compound now being built. Anyone hoping for a hint from Day of who will take over from Wilson to become the colony's last governor will be disappointed. He says he has no idea.

Those brass-necked castaways on Desert Island Discs who insist on choosing their own recordings have some competition in the pool of Narcissus. The *Journal of the Royal Television Society* runs a column in which famous people are invited to nominate their favourite programmes. Janet Street-Porter is thrilled at the opportunity to relieve the solitude by watching her own programmes. She has nominated no fewer than three of them. "I'm not embarrassed," she says.

Maggie's man

MRS THATCHER is not the only member of the Tory old guard to have been enlisted by Central Office to beef up its campaign at this critical moment. An enhanced role is predicted for Stephen Sherbourne, Mrs Thatcher's political secretary from 1983 to 1988, when the Tories had no trouble winning elections. A sharp political operator, he has been se-

conded from the ubiquitous Sir Tim Bell's PR firm for the campaign's duration.

Sherbourne has been working in Downing Street drafting speeches and articles, a role that has left him marginalised from the tactical and strategic decisions being taken in Central Office. While he is not expected to move his base physically to Smith Square, Sherbourne is likely to be given a more central role.

Fortunes of Nigel

NIGEL LAWSON, whose memoirs are due out this autumn, stamped his mark on the publishing world yesterday when he opened the 21st London International Book Fair. With great reluctance he met Linda St Clair of the Conservative party during his walkabout.

She strode up to him as she was handing out her legendary Complimentary Ticket to Ride. "Don't be shy," she said. "They're all like this when there are cameras around."

Even as a former journalist Lawson admits that writing his memoirs has proved a chore. It was "quite the hardest thing I've ever undertaken," he tells the *London International Book Fair Daily*. "I had difficulty in starting. It's a much more substantial piece of work than anything I've done before."

Fax of life

TWO PINTS of lager and a fax is not an order designed to trip off the tongue of the average pub-goer, but regulars at Covent Garden's historic Lamb and Flag are getting used to it. A fax machine has been introduced into the bar. Jeffrey Bernard, speaking to the *Diary* from his fax-free haunt, the Coach and Horses, before going to

Anybody waiting for a decree nisi?



hospital for a minor operation, said: "A fax in a pub will attract all those yuppies with their bloody mobile phones. It's fine for drunken journalists but yuppies should be kept in a back room. Faxing in public is disgusting."

Bradbury's back

MALCOLM BRADBURY, who has become something of a television star in the last few years, has returned to writing and in September will publish his first major novel since 1983.

His publishers, Secker & Warburg, are very excited and Vicki Harris, an editor, says: "It is an excellent novel and it's our great hope for the Booker Prize." Bradbury, a man well placed to pronounce as a former Booker chairman, is a little more modest. "Oh I haven't thought about that but it is an ambitious book."

"I started writing *Dr Criminal* when the Berlin Wall came down and it really is about the 1990s," he says. The book is set in Budapest, Vienna and Brussels which Bradbury is well placed to evoke. "I've travelled a lot in East Europe and was recently in Budapest for a television programme," he says.



A BAD EXAMPLE

Public-sector workers are threatening to strike after wage negotiations with the government collapsed acrimoniously. Inflation is at its highest in a generation. The central bank has pushed real interest rates up to record levels, threatening to halt economic growth. And all this in a country whose labour costs are already the highest in the world. The week-end survey by the Institute of German Economy showing that Germany has higher labour costs even than Switzerland deserves to feature on every election platform this week.

Germany has always traded on being a high-wage, high-skills economy. Now productivity is failing to match wage increases. In 1991 wages rose by about 6 per cent and productivity by only 1 per cent, producing a 5 per cent rise in unit labour costs. The same pattern looks likely to continue this year. The implications for German competitiveness are dreadful.

The reason why the IGE survey has lessons for other countries is that it points up the role that government can play in the micro-economy. On hourly wages, Germany is only the sixth highest in the world. But when the legally enforced social costs met by German employers are added to the equation, Germany becomes the world's most expensive country in which to employ people. BASF is talking of losing 10,000 employees, and Mercedes-Benz, 20,000. German employers look enviously at countries such as Britain which are not just cheaper, but more flexible too. No wonder Japanese companies avoid the country.

Many big German companies are talking about sifting their next generation of factories abroad. Even former East Germany will soon become unattractive. In the metal industry, for instance, East Germans earn about 70 per cent of West German wages now, but that will rise to 100 per cent in two to three years' time. Engineers from Czechoslovakia are almost as skilled as their German counterparts and earn one-fifth of German salaries. Even the British have a

reputation for being prepared to work longer hours for lower pay.

Germany's European Commission negotiators would naturally like all other EC countries to have social provision as generous as their own. That would prevent "social dumping", in which other countries undercut Germany on wage costs by offering workers lower social benefits. But "social dumping" is no more, than the market at work. Portugal's only hope of narrowing the economic gap with France and Germany once the single market comes in next year is to trade on its lower costs.

The hope is that labour costs in the EC will converge, as they gradually have done over the past 20 years. But that must mean levelling-down as well as levelling-up if Europe is to compete in the world. Already Jürgen Möllemann, the Free Democrat federal economics minister, has broken Germany's longstanding consensus. He recently called for the minimum wage mechanism to be abolished and for other social costs to be reduced.

What worse time could there be, then, for Labour to advocate that Britain move in precisely the direction from which wise Germans are struggling to escape? Labour's message at the election is that Britain must enter this uncompetitive cul-de-sac as a matter of urgency, beginning with acceding to the Maastricht social chapter.

Economic competitiveness has long moved in historic cycles. Britain has passed through a period of relative postwar decline. But there are signs that the country could emerge from this recession far more robust than rivals at whom it has long looked with envy. The reason is largely the reforms of the Thatcher administration. It cannot do this if saddled with costs imposed by a government that neither knows nor cares about industrial competitiveness in a world market, and which merely treats industry as a feature of the welfare state. Germany has its qualities, but it is the last country whose social policies Britain can afford to imitate.

THE SERVANT PROBLEM

The Times concludes its series of editorials on Thatcherism's "forgotten supply-side", the professions, with a look at the civil service.

The job of the civil servant is not an issue in this general election, and nothing is likely to give the head of the civil service, Sir Robin Butler, greater pride. The election of a Labour government would, it is true, change nuances. Privatisation of public services would be pursued with less zeal. Contracting out would be on the backburner. A freedom of information act would be introduced and all Sir Robin's ingenuity would be required to minimise its effectiveness. But the civil service has emerged from the 1980s with its transferable technology intact, available to any party of government.

This is no mean achievement. Margaret Thatcher and the ethos of the British civil service co-existed in a love-hate relationship, always close to divorce. She tormented civil servants over their obstructionism and over the indexation of their incomes. She cut their numbers, from 566,000 non-industrial civil servants in 1979 to 495,000 in 1990. She was accused of dividing Whitehall into politicised "believers" and "non-believers". The service bent, but it did not break. A new generation of civil servants rose to the challenge of Thatcherism. Its finest hour was, ironically, after she had gone. At the 1991 Maastricht summit, diplomats and home civil servants smoothly in tandem with their political masters showed what first-class teamwork could do: mastering a brief and exploiting the corridors of crisis to the admiration of the rest of Europe.

The strengths of the British administrative tradition remain what they have been since the 19th-century reforms. Its apolitical character is one. So, more controversially, is the tradition of the generalist, the keeping of other professions with their particular interest on tap rather than on top. Lastly, and equally controversially, is being added the dimension of quantifiable efficiency.

Michael Heseltine's Minis exercise, designed to identify the objectives of each civil servant, worked in part at environment but did not easily transplant to other departments. However, a concern for objectives helped foster the culture from which grew other tools of civil service reform. The *Next Steps* programme involved the hiving-off of functions from departments to quasi-independent agencies: passports to a passport agency, benefits to a benefits agency and so on to a total of 74 agencies. Their chief executives can be recruited from outside, as have been 27 of the 54 chosen by open competition. They serve five-year terms, and reappointment is by no means automatic.

Next Steps has been ponderous in its introduction compared with similar exercises in the private sector. Management is still oppressed from above by the Treasury, whose opposition to the loss of control implied by agency status has been fierce. It continues to restrict capital spending and until recently insisted on civil service terms and conditions applying to staff. Hiring and firing in the open market remains an alien concept to civil servants.

Compulsory tendering for services, like agencies, has enabled Whitehall to rid itself of many of the more irksome managerial activities and many of the more corrupt institutions. It has loosened the stranglehold of that monster of public bureaucracies, the Property Services Agency, and may yet do the same for much of the defence ministry, the prisons and the health service.

Narrowing the remit of the higher service is not the same as reforming it. Civil servants continue to feel unloved and underpaid. One of their more exotic exercises has been to attempt to award themselves performance-linked pay. This may have some relevance in

the management grades, but in the higher service is a direct challenge to the professional elite status that civil servants so covet. Only 24 per cent of women and 42 per cent of men receive performance pay, and the sums involved are small.

But more substantive challenges are in the offing. A theme of the recent election campaign has been the citizen's charter, proposed in various forms by all the parties. The principle is that, every time a civil servant deals with a member of the public, the latter should know how to complain if the former's performance falls short. The arrangement to deal with the complaint must inspire confidence.

While line management may feel the pinch of such reform, the higher professionals will doubtless affirm that they are not concerned. The nearest a British senior civil servant gets to an ordinary member of the public is briefing a junior minister. Even if these reforms are followed to fruition, further changes are either likely or desirable. The civil service career structure remains far too inflexible, the distinction between the executive and the administrative functions too sharp and the obsession with age before ability rampant, most notably in the diplomatic service. Success is insufficiently rewarded and inadequacy goes unpunished.

Most astonishing to those who profess a specialism in administration, there is still little movement between the civil service and the world outside. Management, hindered by national pay determination, is too weak, and too paper-bound. Civil servant associations, though mostly moderate, are among the most powerful in the country, comparable with those representing doctors and lawyers. The formalised career structure linked to early retirement leaves many senior civil servants at the mercy of lobbyists into whose arms they rush on retirement. This remains the greatest corruption in British public life.

Britain lacks a culture in which public administration and management interpenetrate, in the public and private sectors. There is a single-minded obtuseness in the British system, a love of centralism and a loading of pluralism which derive directly from the inexperience of the higher civil service. The elegant draft and the clever compromise are still rated more highly than pro-active management and problem solving.

There is no grand solution to this, but there are important partial solutions. The civil service should not be a career for life. There ought to be a clear-out from the university entry stream in the early 30s, where most of those who are not going up should go out. Personal contracts for civil servants should replace collective conditions. To attract talent with the right private-sector experience, competitive salaries have to be offered, both to the incomers and to insiders. Those who are to run Britain in their 40s and 50s should spend part of their careers in the private sector and apply by open competition for their promotions.

The top civil servant of the future will continue to outwit politicians as his or her central activity. But running new slimmed departments, supervising public-sector agencies and regulating the privatised former public sector will call for skills not prevalent within the existing ethos. All professions now have to exist in a world that does not owe them a living, which expects efficient and courteous service, and which will complain loudly or sue if it does not get what it expects. A professional is one who, in the exercise of his or her skills, puts the client first. That must apply above all to public servants.

Election priorities for UK scientists

From Professor Paul Nurse, FRS, and others

Sir, The letter from Sir Allen Sheppard and others (March 17) leads us to conclude that in the current political climate the views of certain captains of industry could hardly be more at odds with our own.

As the general election approaches we believe that British scientists should urgently consider the long-term implications for their research of a change of government.

One of the principal disasters in Britain in the past 12 years has been the draining of optimism from the scientific community, a community that in 1979 still held out hope of maintaining world-class standards of research. Today that hope seems in many cases almost lost for ever.

There is evidence all around us of this lack of spirit. Recent years have seen a dramatic deterioration in the quality and depth of British science, in part the result of the emigration of many of our leading researchers to more favourable climates. This is not simply our collective opinion, but has been borne out by those selecting Nobel laureates over the past 15 years. Between 1974 and 1979, British scientists won six Nobel prizes. In 1980-5 the number dropped to four, and for 1986-91 there was just one British laureate.

We have seen a progressive erosion of public investment in research. This government claims an increase in real terms in funding of science since 1979. Such claims fail to take into account the fact that the costs of staying at the frontiers of research rise faster than general inflation.

Between 1981 and 1991, government funding of the science base fell from 0.35 per cent at the start to 0.28 per cent of GDP at the end of the period. This shortfall has not, contrary to popular opinion, been

balanced by an equivalent increase in industrially funded research and development. Of 14 OECD countries the UK is consequently the only one to show a decline in total investment in civil research as a percentage of GDP from 1981 to 1989.

The spirit of scientific enterprise is not a hardy plant. If it is to flourish once more it requires the same sort of encouragement it enjoyed before 1979. In the interests of Britain's future prosperity we must ask ourselves which of the political parties, on the evidence of past performances and pre-election utterances, is most likely to provide these conditions. In other words, whom can we trust to put scientific enterprise first?

The above reflects our personal views and not necessarily those of the university departments and institutes which we chair and/or in which we continue to strive to carry out research.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL NURSE (University of Oxford),
ADRIAN BIRD (Edinburgh),
COLIN BLAKEMORE (Oxford),
DAVID BROWN (London),
DAVID COLQUHOUN (London),
RICHARD FAVELL (John Innes Institute, Norwich),
PETER GOODFELLOW (Cambridge),
DAVID HOPWOOD (John Innes Institute),
ALBA JEFFREYS (Leicester),
STEVE JONES (London),
RICHARD KEYNES (Cambridge),
MICHAEL LANTO (Sussex),
BIRGIT LANE (Dundee),
CHRIS MARSHALL (London),
DENIS NOBLE (Oxford),
MAX PERUTZ (Cambridge),
MARTIN RAFF (London),
DAVID SHERRATT (Glasgow),
ED SOUTHERN (Oxford),
MAURICE WILKINS (London),
University of Oxford,
South Parks Road, Oxford,
March 19.

'Invisible' women

From Professor Laura Lepachy and Professor Hannah Steinberg

Sir, We sympathise with the frustration of Dr Gillian Morris-Kay (letter, March 18) who, as a member of Oxford University's year-old Equal Opportunities Committee, points out that the university's barely 4 per cent of professors who are female has recently fallen to an even lower 3.3 per cent following 27 all-male promotions.

We are not complacent about the overall position of women in this college, but we feel that progress is being made. The number of women professors at University College London has risen from four in 1979-80 to 20 in 1991-2 — which is 9 per cent of the total current professoriate of 227, and the highest percentage

nationally (national average 2-3 per cent).

UCL now also has five women heads of academic departments, two women deans, and women in other key positions, e.g., the director of finance and planning.

UCL's progress is in large part due to its pioneering and liberal tradition and to the efforts of the immediate past and present provosts. They have fostered an ethos which translates equal opportunities policy into practice. Do persevere, Oxford!

Yours faithfully,
LAURA LEPSCHY (Chairman, Committee on Equal Opportunity),
HANNAH STEINBERG (Convener, Academic Women's Achievement Group),
University College London,
Gower Street, WC1,
March 20.

Aid for Albania

From Miss Primrose Peacock

Sir, Having recently returned from Albania, I agree with Mr David Grubb (letter, March 16) that the whole population needs aid. However, although trucking out old clothes and other surplus or donated goods from the UK may be an effective short-term stop gap, which keeps salaried relief agency personnel in employment, it is not a real solution. My Albanian friends at all levels say what they desperately need is skill-aid, technological and academic assistance and vital raw materials for work. They would prefer to help themselves.

Such aid can only be supplied in a cost-effective manner by correctly administered government schemes. The first step for Britain would be to re-establish a diplomatic presence in Tirana and to show willing.

Yours sincerely,
PRIMROSE PEACOCK (Honorary Secretary, Friends of Albania),
Peascoe, Thurlington,
Taunton, Somerset.

Council tax valuations

From Mr Raymond Durrant

Sir, Mr Lidl, a chartered surveyor (letter, March 13), expresses surprise that up to 50 per cent of batches of council tax valuations put out to tender to private surveyors have been "falsified" due to errors.

For my part, also writing as a chartered surveyor, I would not find the failure rate at all high, bearing in mind that, first, the private surveyors are not entitled to inspect the properties internally but must rely upon an inspection carried out from the street in arriving at their valuations;

Egyptian obelisks

From Mr Brian David Skinner

Sir, Mr Michael Davies (letter, March 16) is correct in regard to the Paris obelisk but not about Cleopatra's Needle. This and its partner (now in New York's Central Park) were moved to Alexandria from Heliopolis after the death of the famous queen to stand at the water gate of the Caesareum, a palace commissioned by her in memory of Julius Caesar.

The London obelisk fell some time before 1610, probably due to the theft of its bronze supports by the locals. Although presented to Britain in 1820, it was not transported until 1877, after threats to demolish it by the owner of the land on which it lay.

The American obelisk, although still erect, was undermined by the sea and near to toppling.

The parallel with the rescue of the Elgin marbles is exact. Had the obelisks remained in Egypt they would now be builders' rubble.

Yours faithfully,
B. D. SKINNER,
212 Muswell Hill Broadway, N10.

Too long on the Bench?

From Mr Adrian Jack

Sir, David Pannick ("Too long on the Bench", March 12) does not deal with the deleterious consequences of reducing the retirement age of judges. There are simply not enough judges, especially for ordinary Queen's Bench actions, because they have other more pressing duties.

The High Court manages to stay abreast of its work only with a mixture of QCs sitting part-time, circuit judges sitting temporarily as High Court judges, and retired High Court judges returning to sit. There is a similar reliance on *ad hoc* judges in the county and crown courts.

The Lord Chancellor's proposal to consider reducing the retirement age to 70 will merely increase the numbers of temporary judges.

Unlike full High Court judges, retired judges sit at the invitation of the Lord Chancellor, which can be and is sometimes withdrawn, with the possibility of abuse.

Earlier retirements will lead to earlier appointments, accentuating the trend for the age of judges on appointment to drop from the early 50s to the late 40s. Even if solicitor recruitment is increased, candidates for these positions will come predominantly from high-calibre barristers of 20 to 30 years' call at the peak of their careers. If these advocates are appointed some five years earlier than before, the public will have seriously reduced access to the best legal advice and representation.

The best solution may be to abolish a fixed retirement age but to insist that judges pass regular medical tests.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN JACK,
2 Paper Buildings, Temple, EC4,
March 16.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

'Hollow victory' of ivory trade ban

From Dr Robin Pellew

Sir, The extended ban on the trade in elephant ivory agreed at the Kyoto conference of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (report, March 11) was a hollow victory for conservation. In reality, this emergency measure is a manifestation of the past failure to effectively manage the species.

Sustainable use should be seen as part of the repertoire of enlightened conservation: trade bans should be the last resort when all else fails. A genuine victory would have been to see sustainable use in effective operation.

The reason why the southern African countries withdrew their proposal for a partial lifting of the ban was the pressure exerted by nations, not least Britain, that exercise no sovereign rights over the management of elephant populations. In countries like Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa elephant numbers are increasing, and despite the ban on ivory sales they will continue to be culled to maintain the ecological balance of their habitat.

What these countries sought, and have now been denied, was the opportunity to benefit from their enlightened management policies. By resuming a sustainable trade in skins and ivory under rigorous international controls, they could generate the incentives necessary for

effective community-based conservation. The opportunities for such creative conservation have now been frustrated.

As stressed by your report, the CITES conference in Japan has produced little of constructive value to secure the future of the African elephant. A compromise to allow a restricted trade in skins but a continued moratorium on ivory has been lost.

It is possible that the alienation of the southern African countries will lead to their withdrawing from CITES and resuming the ivory trade outside the controls of the international Convention. The inevitable consequence will be to exacerbate the threats to the elephant throughout the whole of Africa. The conservation lobby risks scoring an own-goal.

In January, the African states submitted plans to the donor countries for the conservation of their elephant populations. The total cost was in the region of \$350 million. In the light of Britain's advocacy of a total ban on all elephant products, its pledge of \$1 million towards elephant conservation in Africa is both niggardly and hypocritical.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN PELLEW (Director),
World Conservation
Monitoring Centre,
219 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge,
March 19.

Tellers' role

From Mr David Monks

Sir, Judging by my experience of past elections, I suspect that many of your readers may not fully understand the role of the tellers outside polling stations. This has recently been clarified by the Home Office, in conjunction with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, in the form of a code of guidance which may be summarised thus:

Tellers have no status so far as electoral law is concerned and are not admitted to the polling station. They must not give the impression they are employed by the returning officer and must concern themselves only with checking who has voted. They must not hand out election material or try to influence the way someone will vote. Furthermore, they should not ask voters whom they intend to vote for or how they have voted.

Their activities are confined to

asking voters for their poll card or electoral number and voters should not be approached until after they have left the polling station. Most importantly they must not in any way impede or obstruct voters nor press voters for any information; voters are not obliged to hand over their poll card or comply with any request. In most cases, tellers remain outside the polling station, but there is no objection to them wearing coloured rosettes in order to make it clear they are party workers and not polling station officials.

I hope that voters will find this guidance of some assistance to them on April 9.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MONKS (Chief Executive, North Warwickshire Borough Council, acting returning officer, North Warwickshire constituency),
Old Bank House, Long Street,
Atherstone, Warwickshire,
March 20.

Interpreting polls

From Sir Claus Moser, FBA

Sir, Everyone knows that the outcome of elections can depend crucially on turnout and late shifts of opinion, especially amongst floaters and undecided voters. This is why pollsters have been urged in the past to try to assess (a) intention actually to vote; and (b) likelihood to go in one direction or the other amongst the "don't knows" or "undecideds".

No doubt some of the more sophisticated pollsters are doing this.

Mortgage arrears

From the Chairman of the National Consumer Council

Sir, Mark Bolat, Director General of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, is reported ("Are the lenders lacking in tact?", *Life & Times*, March 18) as believing that the courts provide protection for consumers with mortgage arrears if lenders act too quickly. The reality is that in all too many county courts people are losing their homes after less than a two-minute hearing. This is often the level of "protection" the courts offer.

Mortgage lenders should be required to provide a certificate to the court to show what other steps they have taken to clear arrears. Only if the court is satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken should they even hear the case.

Moreover, under the Administration of Justice Act 1970 the courts do have wide powers to postpone, adjourn or suspend possession. The court can avoid making a possession order if it is satisfied that arrears can be cleared in a "reasonable period". But how do lenders and the courts interpret what is a "reasonable period"? Up and down the country consumers are being expected to clear arrears over two or three years when a loan has been made for over maybe 20 or 25 years.

Isn't it time that lenders and the courts were prepared to look at longer periods of time? Shouldn't they start by looking at the remaining lifetime of the mortgage?

Yours sincerely,
JUDITH WILCOX, Chairman,
National Consumer Council,
20 Grosvenor Gardens, SW1.

Yugoslav monarchy

From Professor G. V. Tomashevich

Sir, It is not true ("Serbian royals feud over who should be king", March 17), that Crown Prince Alexander does not speak Serbo-Croat, a language in which he is quite conversant, as demonstrated by his lengthy speech before the Serbian Heritage Academy of Canada on March 14, which I attended.

Still less is it true that a few tragic and exceptional departures from the principle of (male) primogeniture in Serbia's millennial and turbulent history constitute a "Serbian tradition of ignoring the normal line of succession" (Prince Vladimir's letter, March 19).

More than ever, the Serbian nation needs to return to the

authenticity and legitimacy of its pre-communist traditions, brutally interrupted by the internationally legitimised but never legitimate communist usurpation of power.

The only person fully qualified to restore Serbia's pre-communist, democratic, parliamentary and constitutional monarchy and lead the country forward in a spirit of genuine, non-partisan, all-national reconciliation is Crown Prince Alexander, the only son of, and the only legitimate heir to, the late King Peter II, exiled by Hitler and deposed by Tito.

Yours faithfully,
G. V. TOMASHEVICH,
Buffalo State University College,
Department of Anthropology,
1300 Elmwood Avenue,
Buffalo, New York 14222-1095.

Under-developed?

From Mr Michael A. Huxley

Sir, For over ten years I have been using empty film canisters (letters, March 18, 21) as objects during brainstorming exercises within our leadership courses for undergraduate engineering students. The following is a small selection of the alternative uses that have been suggested:

Fishing float, container for "messages in bottles" and for matches or anything else to be kept dry, salt and pepper shakers, pastry cutter, ferrule for table or chair legs, protection for anything sharp, frisbee (lid only), insulation (thermal or electrical), dustbin for doll's house, roller, wheel for toy, whisky measure.

Earrings for punks, template for

drawing circles, plant pot for seedlings, send to *Blue Peter*, use with string to make a child's telephone, glue together to make a desk tidy, mould for jelly or other substances, use for juggling, missile.

Muzzle for ferocious hamster, use for acoustic properties, use in place of balls in a dry swimming pool, home for pet beetle, pinhole camera, bung, use to eavesdrop on conversations in next room, baby's rattle, miniature tom-toms, hang over stakes in the garden to protect the eyes.

Does Mrs Harbridge need more? Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL A. HUXLEY (Deputy Dean of Engineering),
University of Surrey,
Department of Civil Engineering,
Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XH,
March 21.

OBITUARIES

JACK KELSEY

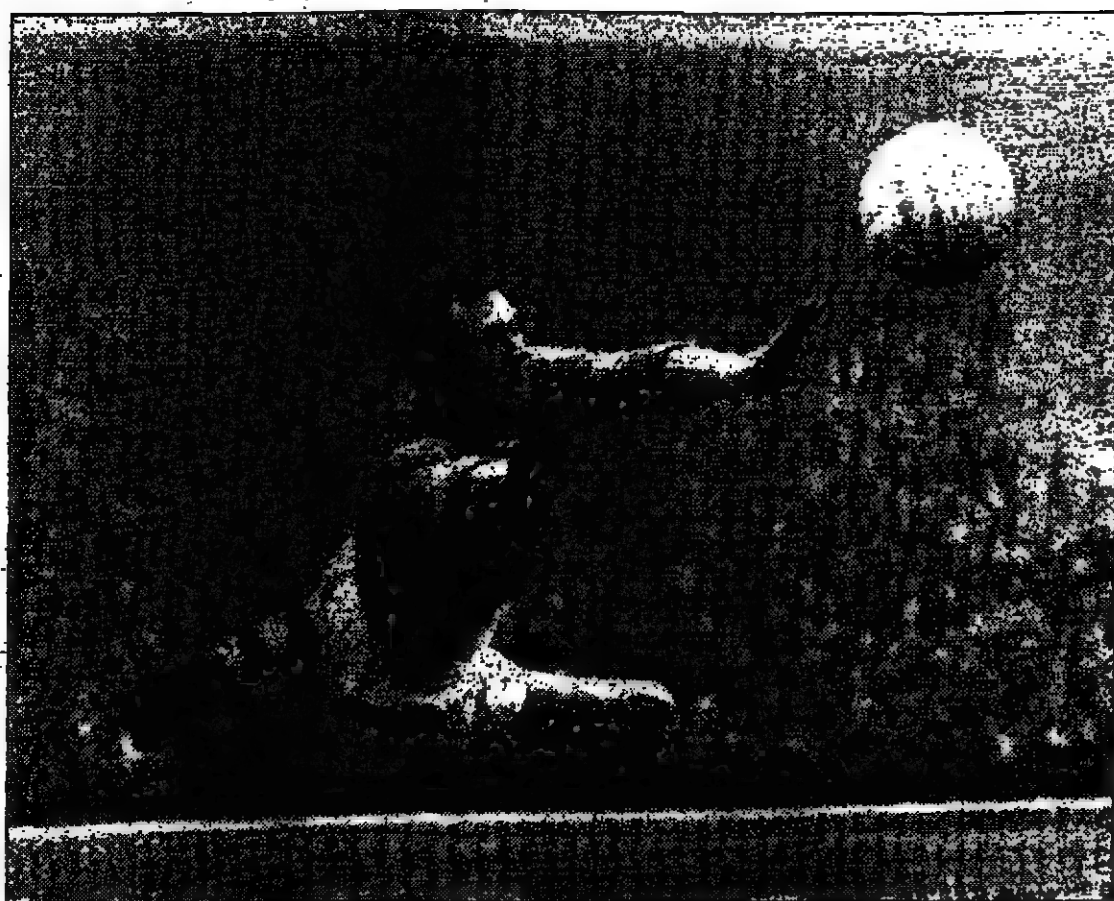
Jack Kelsey, former Wales and Arsenal goalkeeper, died on March 20 aged 62. He was born on November 19, 1929.

A VITALLY important member of the outstanding Welsh team which reached the quarter finals of the 1958 World Cup, Jack Kelsey was possibly the greatest goalkeeper ever to play for Wales. Only the present occupant, Neville Southall, could rival him for that title. Kelsey had wonderful agility when called upon and — as befitted a former blacksmith — he was strong and untroubled by the buffeting which were part of the goalkeeper's lot in those days. But he will be remembered above all for his unspectacular style, based on outstanding positional sense. More often than not, shots seem to go straight at a large, notably safe, pair of hands. That owed little to fortune.

A student of his profession, he developed his goalkeeping as a science, working out the angles with such care that in practice he would lay down ropes from his goal to help him judge his position. He was a professional to his fingertips, even rolling chewing-gum into his hands before each game as an aid to safe handling.

A member of the Arsenal team which won the Football League championship in 1953, his ability was recognised by his selection for Britain against Europe in Belfast in 1955, but he undoubtedly reached his peak in the 1958 World Cup. With the *Allchurch* and *Charles* brothers and *Cliff Jones* in the team, it was a golden age for Welsh soccer, and in particular for South Wales. Kelsey enjoyed an outstanding tournament as Wales ultimately went out to the eventual winners, Brazil (when they were forced to play without John Charles), only succumbing 1-0.

Born in Llanmaes, Kelsey grew up with football at nearby Winch Wen, a village near Swansea, starting as the local team's mascot. By



the time he was 11 he was a goalkeeper at school, and was travelling to watch Swansea Town play in wartime regional football whenever he could. At 14 he left school, working in the local steelworks, and beginning his football with Winch Wen Juniors before doing his national service.

After the army he returned to Winch Wen, this time to first team football in the Swansea and District League. The last match of the 1948-49 season, against one of the best local sides, proved the turning-point. Kelsey played under something of a cloud because a cousin's

21st birthday party should have taken precedence in family eyes. Yet he had the best game of his fledgling career, culminating in two penalty saves.

At the final whistle he was approached by the referee and the taker of the second penalty, Len Morris, a former Arsenal junior. The referee suggested that he should go to Bolton; Morris suggested Arsenal. After initial hesitancy, Kelsey was persuaded to let Morris contact Highbury, and after a series of trials, he signed for Arsenal.

His work in the steelworks, and national service, had made him a

powerful figure and he quickly made an impression as understudy to George Swindin. His first team debut came in his second season, 1950-51, but it was not a happy one. Charlton, then at the bottom of the first division, won 5-2 at Highbury. A week later Kelsey conceded another three, against Manchester United, and was returned to the reserves.

With Swindin ever-present the following season, Kelsey's career had halted temporarily, but an injury to Swindin allowed him back in the next year, and this time he held his place as Arsenal won the champion-

ship from Preston on goal average by the narrowest of margins. It was to be his only medal as Arsenal then suffered a period in the shadows in spite of his enduring excellence.

The 1953-54 season marked his arrival in the first rank of goalkeepers, and he earned the first of his 41 Welsh caps that year against Northern Ireland at Wrexham. He immediately made the position his own, playing with calm authority as Wales embarked on the most fruitful spell in their history as the Manchester United assistant manager, Jimmy Murphy, became team manager to impose some semblance of order on a chaotic structure.

Even so, they qualified for the finals for the first time by the back door, winning a battle for the right to play off against Israel. But, once there, they surpassed expectations. They began inauspiciously enough, drawing with Hungary, Mexico and Sweden in their first round group, but the decisive match, a play-off against Hungary, saw their finest hour. Wales winning 2-1 in spite of some brutal tackling by the Hungarians.

That deprived them of John Charles for the match with Brazil, and it was too much to expect them to progress further. The shots tally was 31 against five, but with Kelsey in breathtaking form, earning praise as the best goalkeeper in the world, Brazil could beat him only once, and that by a deflection.

Kelsey returned to Arsenal, playing three more seasons before he retired, perhaps prematurely, at the end of the 1961-62 season after 327 League games for the club. Fittingly he ended his career wearing his Welsh jersey in Brazil.

A soft spoken, gently humorous man, Kelsey was the epitome of the one-club player. He did not leave Highbury, going onto the club's commercial side and eventually becoming the commercial manager.

FARES BEY SAROFIM

Fares Bey Sarofim, Egyptian former executive of the Alamein Club for Allied Troops in Cairo and long-time friend of Britain, died on February 24, aged 89. He was born on March 3, 1902.

FARES Bey Sarofim was largely instrumental in building both the Alamein Club for Allied troops' recreation at Gezira in Cairo during the second world war, and for the expansion of Enham Alamein village centre in Hampshire after the war. He was the last surviving Egyptian vice president (1944-1959) of Enham Alamein, where, at that time, the provision of homes, training and work was largely confined to ex-servicemen and their families. Royal patrons included King George VI, Queen Mary, the Princess Royal, Princess Alice and her husband, the Earl of Athlone.

The existing establishment, founded in 1917, was greatly expanded after the second world war — much on the initiative of Sarofim Bey — by the gift of a substantial amount of money gathered from an Egyptian appeal committee. The funds raised were also used to help the Alamein Club in Cairo, which had become the sports centre for Allied forces throughout the Middle East.

Sarofim Bey, in assisting to choose the form of this benefaction, was much influenced by the existing achievements of Enham, and its associated charity Pagworth village settlement near Cambridge, linked by the pioneering thought and work of Sir Penderell Varrier-Jones. He was aided, both in Egypt and England, by his Oxford contemporary and friend, Amin Osman Pasha, then minister of finance in Egypt.

Fares Sarofim was born into a landed Coptic family, and was educated at Victoria College, Alexandria. He went up to Keble College, Oxford in 1921, where he read law and played cricket and soccer for his college. He was president of the Cosmopolitan Club in 1923, whose members wished to spread knowledge of their home cultures in England, by such means as

speaking in working men's clubs. After Oxford he pursued his studies in Paris. On return to Egypt he expanded his family estates at Minia by boring wells in the desert on the eastern bank, pioneering methods of crop and animal husbandry, and evolving a system of crop storage and banking facility that aimed at extricating the peasant from debt. He married in 1930 his remarkable and widely loved wife, Blanche, third daughter of Morcos Simaika Pasha, founder of the Coptic Museum in old Cairo, and both in the Sarofim house in Minia, and later in their Cairo apartment, they dispensed a hospi-



ality that is yet remembered by scores of English and other visitors. He brought a cricketer's team to England in 1951, and was a lifelong member of the MCC.

The increasingly stringent land reform programme of Egypt's revolutionary government of the 1950s removed him from the land he had created and loved, and the progress of the revolution caused him to relinquish his foreign business interests. He refused to leave his country, hoping that his counsel and wide knowledge of men and affairs could influence the revolutionary course, to which he initially was not opposed. But events proved too strong for him. In Cairo, until 1980, he ran the Golden Hotel in Suleiman Pasha Street, where he welcomed young travellers, to whom he was a sage father figure.

YVES ROCARD

Yves Rocard, CBE, a contributor to the French atomic bomb and father of Michel Rocard, former French prime minister, died at his Paris home on March 16, aged 88. He was born on May 16, 1903.

AN INSATIABLY curious, eclectic physicist, who carried out research into such varied fields as acoustics, radio-astronomy, air navigation, atomic triggers, thermodynamics and the effect of wind on high bridges, Yves Rocard was at one time reputed to be among the most brilliant French scientists of his generation, but in later years came to be regarded as something of an eccentric on account of his passionate interest in bio-



magnetism and water divining.

Born into a well-to-do Protestant family at Vannes in Brittany, Rocard attended the top Parisian lycée, Louis le-Grand, before going on to the equally elite Ecole Normale Supérieure. His studies were financed by the state, his father having been killed in active service as a pilot during the first world war.

After obtaining a double doctorate in mathematics and physics, he worked from 1928 to 1938 in the electronics industry. When war broke out he had a nominal teaching post at the Sorbonne, but soon joined the Resistance,

working first in France and then for British Scientific Intelligence in London.

Rocard first came into contact with the British intelligence service in 1943, when R.V. Jones, his head, was trying to obtain details of a new radar navigational beam station in France, probably intended to guide German night fighters. The British had been planning to parachute in one of their own officers, but Rocard was able to smuggle out such excellent scientific details that further information was deemed unnecessary.

Rocard was appointed CBE in recognition of his wartime services. He was also made Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour and of the Order of Merit by the post-war French government.

In 1945 he was appointed head of the physics department of his old university, the Ecole Normale Supérieure, a post which he was to hold until his retirement nearly 30 years later at the age of 70. "What was so wonderful about him," said Hubert Curien, one of his former students and now minister for research and technology, "was that he taught us things you could never find in books."

Considered to have made a vital contribution to the development of the French atomic bomb in the 1950s, Rocard himself always sought to play down his role, saying that he merely contributed "a few thoughts and a few very theoretical calculations".

The latter part of his life was devoted to his research into bio-magnetism and the power of water diviners. This earned him the derision of many of his scientific colleagues, but helped make him a household name in France. His last book on the subject was written just three years ago, when he was 85. He also recently published his memoirs, *Mémoires sans concession*. Yves Rocard married Renée Favre. Beside their son, Michel, they had a daughter, Claudine.

YOSSI STERN

Yossi Stern, Jerusalem painter and illustrator, died in hospital on March 14 aged 69, after a series of heart attacks. He was born in Hungary.

YOSSI Stern had a colourful past even before he began his long career as "the painter of Jerusalem". In 1939 at the age of 16 he left his small village in Hungary as one of the Youth Aliya organisation — youngsters brought to Israel as "illegal" immigrants — and so saved from the Holocaust.

Stern spent six months toiling about the oceans in a small battered Turkish coal carrier before reaching Palestine. He spent his early years working all over the land: harvesting tobacco crops in the north of the country, picking bananas in the Jordan valley, fishing on the Sea of Galilee, mending roads in Tel Aviv and working on construction jobs in the southern Negev. He then enrolled as a student at the Bezalel academy of the arts in Jerusalem and later at the Royal College of Art in London.

He completed his studies in 1946 and the following year began teaching at Bezalel and enjoyed his first exhibition in Jerusalem. Stern was to teach at Bezalel for the next 35 years and many of his pupils such as Ya'acov Agam and Dani Karavan are among Israel's leading artists.

During the War of Independence Stern's drawings and sketches of Israeli fighters contributed to creating the image of the cocky, young Sabra Jew battling against the odds to secure a homeland. His reportage cartoons appeared in Israeli magazines and newspapers for many years. Stern's most popular work, exhibited all over the world, is contained in his broad portfolio of water colours depicting the people and places of Jerusalem.

The pictures blend humour and the exotic, depicting the scenes of the city and the



A view of Jerusalem by Yossi Stern from his book *Homecoming*

characters who walk its streets, Jew and Arab, young and old, religious and secular, westerner and oriental. There were also rarely exhibited erotic paintings done by Stern springing from his homosexuality, about which he maintained a quiet discretion.

He was deeply angered when his relationship with Leonard Bernstein became a public talking point — but, as he pointed out to an interviewer several years ago, "I never hid in a closet nor came out of a closet. Anyone who asked me about my homosexuality would always be told

the truth. But there were few who asked."

Stern won several prizes including the UNESCO Prize in 1967 and the Herod Prize for his album *People of the Book* in 1978. His greatest disappointment was the fact that although his drawings and paintings drew popular praise and were exhibited and sold around the world he never quite gained the acclaim he sought of being a serious artist, for many critics considered his work too facile or over-sentimental. Nevertheless he denied his unofficial title of "the painter of Jerusalem."



LIVES REMEMBERED

A COLLECTION of 180 obituaries from the 900 or so published on this page during 1991 has been produced in book form, edited by David Henton and John Higgins, under the title *Lives Remembered*.

The bishops, judges and peers who traditionally occupied the obituary columns now mingle with businessmen, TV stars and sportsmen. The infamous may occasionally rub shoulders with the famous — all walks and conditions of life are represented. *Lives Remembered*, fully illustrated and with a foreword by Lord Annan, is available at £19.95 from the Blewbury Press, 10, Station Road, Pangbourne, Berks. RG8 7AN (Tel. 0235 850110, Fax 0734 843336).

Mail order coupon on facing page

March 23 ON THIS DAY 1893



This outbreak of anti-Semitism in Germany originated about 1879 as a political struggle between the Jewish supported National Liberals and a coalition of Conservatives and Roman Catholics. Later racial antagonism spread among the lower classes, finding a leader in Hermann Ahlwardt whose scandalous propaganda inflamed the mob into attacks on Jews. Eventually Ahlwardt over-reached himself; he lost support in the Reichstag and by the end of the century anti-Semitism was discredited.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE REICHSTAG

Such castigation as Ahlwardt today received in the Imperial Diet is assuredly without precedent. In Parliamentary records, equally unparalleled is the stolid indifference with which the Anti-Semitic leader, standing for three hours in the pillory, listened to the stern condemnation passed upon him by colleagues of every party, even by those whose indulgence he might have been in some measure entitled to look for. Such insensibility cannot be described as shamelessness. It can only proceed from a partial paralysis of the moral or of the intellectual faculties.

The House had adjourned yesterday to allow Ahlwardt time to produce evidence in support of the charges of corruption he had brought in the course of yesterday's debate against certain members of the Government and Legislature. He had claimed to possess 11 official and original documents of a most compromising character, and he had been challenged to show them. When the House met today he showed some reluctance to come forward, but under some pressure he ascended the tri-

bune and calmly announced that time had failed him to collect his materials.

The papers he had alluded to weighed 2 cw, and he had distributed them among his friends for safe custody. Unfortunately, one of his friends was out of town, another was moving, a third had been unable to find them, etc, and all he had been able to lay hands on for the present were eight documents of subordinate importance, which did not represent a tithe of his case. However, as an earnest of his good faith he laid them on the table.

The murmurs with which this statement was received showed that the House was in no mood to be trifled with, and on the motion of Count Ballestrem it decided to suspend its sitting for an hour and to appoint a committee to peruse such documents as Ahlwardt had produced.

An hour later the House resumed, and Count Ballestrem read the report of the Select Committee to the effect that not only was there nothing in the documents brought forward by Ahlwardt that in the least bore upon the charges he had raised, but that he had been unable to give even an outline of the other documents upon which he claimed to base them. In these circumstances the committee could only place on record its opinion that Ahlwardt's conduct was "such as the Imperial Diet had hitherto, thank God, never been called upon to witness."

Not a word of apology or explanation had Ahlwardt to offer. Still less was he disposed to the only decent alternative of silence. He maintained his accusations. If others feared the Jews, his voice should never be silenced by the hypocrites who preferred to cover up Germany's sores rather than to lay a bold and saving hand upon the gangrened places. Time after time he recommended to the tribune, and stood forth unabashed by the murmurs of the House, undisturbed by derisive laughter.

Nature notes

GREEN woodpeckers are pairing up after living alone all the winter. Both males and females are giving the loud spring laughing call to attract a mate; they then explore nest-holes together. When they attack another woodpecker interested in the hole, it often runs up the tree trunk in spirals with the pursuers behind it.

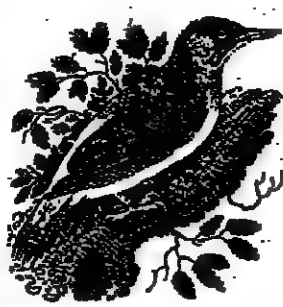
Wrens are singing higher in the trees, and their song can be heard a quarter of a mile away. Chaffinches are singing regularly, and also making a distinctive call like a stone splashing into water.

The first wheatears are arriving from tropical Africa.

In Britain, they nest on rocky hillsides, but they stop to feed on migration anywhere in open country.

Wood anemones are coming out alongside dog's mercury; they grow in small clumps of white stars, often with seven petals, streaked with purple beneath. Sweet violet and dog violet often lurk nearby.

Primroses are opening; they are sometimes found among the more stridently yellow patches of lesser celandine in churchyards. In the hedgerows, the small white flowers of cherry-plum are blossoming among leaf-shoots. The half-open leaves



GREEN WOODPECKER

on the horse chestnuts are like small green parachutes; some have already been blown down by the wind.

DJM

Church news

Appointments
The Right Rev Morris Maddocks: to be Prebend of Bradchester in Chichester Cathedral (Chichester).
The Rev John Martin, Vicar, Walsall (The Plick), St John: to be Vicar, Whitington, St Giles w. Weard (Lichfield).
The Rev Andrew Mayes, Vicar, Kingsstanding, St Mark (Birmingham): to be Vicar, Salford (Chichester).
The Rev David Pasika, Rector, Waldron (Chichester): to be Rector, Bere Ferrers w. Bere Alston (Exeter).
The Rev Edward Perry, Vicar, Cornwood: to be Vicar, Ermington and Ugborough (Exeter).
The Rev John Punter, Director, Manchester Christian Institute, Director, Christian Leadership Course and Education Officer for

the Northern Federation for Training in Ministry, in the diocese of Manchester: to be Anglican Team Rector, Stantonbury Ecumenical parish (Oxford).
The Rev Margaret Saunders, Chaplain's Assistant, Aylesbury Vale Health Authority: to be Anglican Chaplain (whole-time), Milton Keynes Health Authority (Oxford).
The Rev Humphrey Southern, Senior Assistant Curate, Walton Team Ministry (Liverpool): to be Vicar, St John the Evangelist, Hale (Guildford).
The Rev Alistair Stewart-Sykes, Assistant Curate, St Andrew and St George, Shrewsbury (St Albans): to be Assistant Curate, St Catherine, Castle Vale (Birmingham).
The Rev John Strong, Curate, Mayfield: to be Curate, Seaford (Chichester).

The Rev Simon Tebbutt, non-subsidiary Curate, St Matthew's, Northampton: to be non-subsidiary Team Vicar for the developing areas of Duxton, Northampton (Peterborough).
The Rev Graham Theobald, of Bracknell: to be Curate, Easthampstead (Oxford).

Luncheon

High Sheriff of Greater Manchester
The High Sheriff of Greater Manchester and Mrs Wilson were hosts at a luncheon held yesterday in Wilmslow, Cheshire. The guests included Judge and Mrs Blackburn, the Deputy Chief Constable of Greater Manchester and Mrs Cairns, the German Consul General and Mrs Kroger and Canon and Mrs Peter Vowles.

Concordes checked after rudder part lost in flight

By HARVEY ELLIOT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

A BRITISH Airways Concorde lost a 24sq ft section of its rudder while flying at 1,400 mph and more than 50,000ft above the Atlantic at the weekend. The incident is the third involving a Concorde rudder and led last night to an urgent safety review of all BA Concordes in service.

Each of the seven planes is being subjected to minute examination before take-off. BA officials said last night that they were considering ordering the replacement of all Concorde rudders.

In the latest incident, a 6ft

by 4ft section of Concorde "AB" was ripped away, causing a momentary vibration which was noticed but not identified by the pilots. As the supersonic jet, which was carrying 58 passengers and nine crew, approached New York, the vibration returned and the crew shut down the outer left-hand engine, which they believed could be responsible. The vibration continued but, when the crew shut down the inner left-hand engine, it disappeared and the aircraft was able to make a normal landing on three engines.

As the aircraft taxied to the stand, it was noticed that its upper rudder was missing. It was thought that the vibration was caused by this and that there was nothing wrong with any of the engines.

Investigators are now trying to find out what caused the tail plane to disintegrate. It seems that attempts to remedy the cause of two previous incidents involving almost identical parts of the aircraft have been unsuccessful.

In April 1989, Concorde AF lost part of its upper rudder while flying into Sydney. In January 1991, a Concorde flying from Heathrow to New York lost a similar piece from its lower rudder.

In the first incident, an internal BA investigation indicated that there was a leak along an edge which affected the internal structure and caused it to break off. Following the second incident, official air accident investigators were called in and discovered that paint stripper which had been used on the rudder had reacted with the glue holding the plastic or composite materials together and caused them to lose their adhesion. They recommended a new type of bonding which they were convinced would prevent such an incident from happening again.

It now seems that they were wrong and that the rudder has an inherent design fault which its manufacturers, British Aerospace, were trying to trace last night.

The rudders are routinely inspected for signs of the problem every 500 flying hours. This, it now appears, is too long an interval and the checks are to be introduced far more often.

Credit cards cloned

Continued from page 1

company didn't think it worthwhile obtaining further details which might help explain how my card was used.

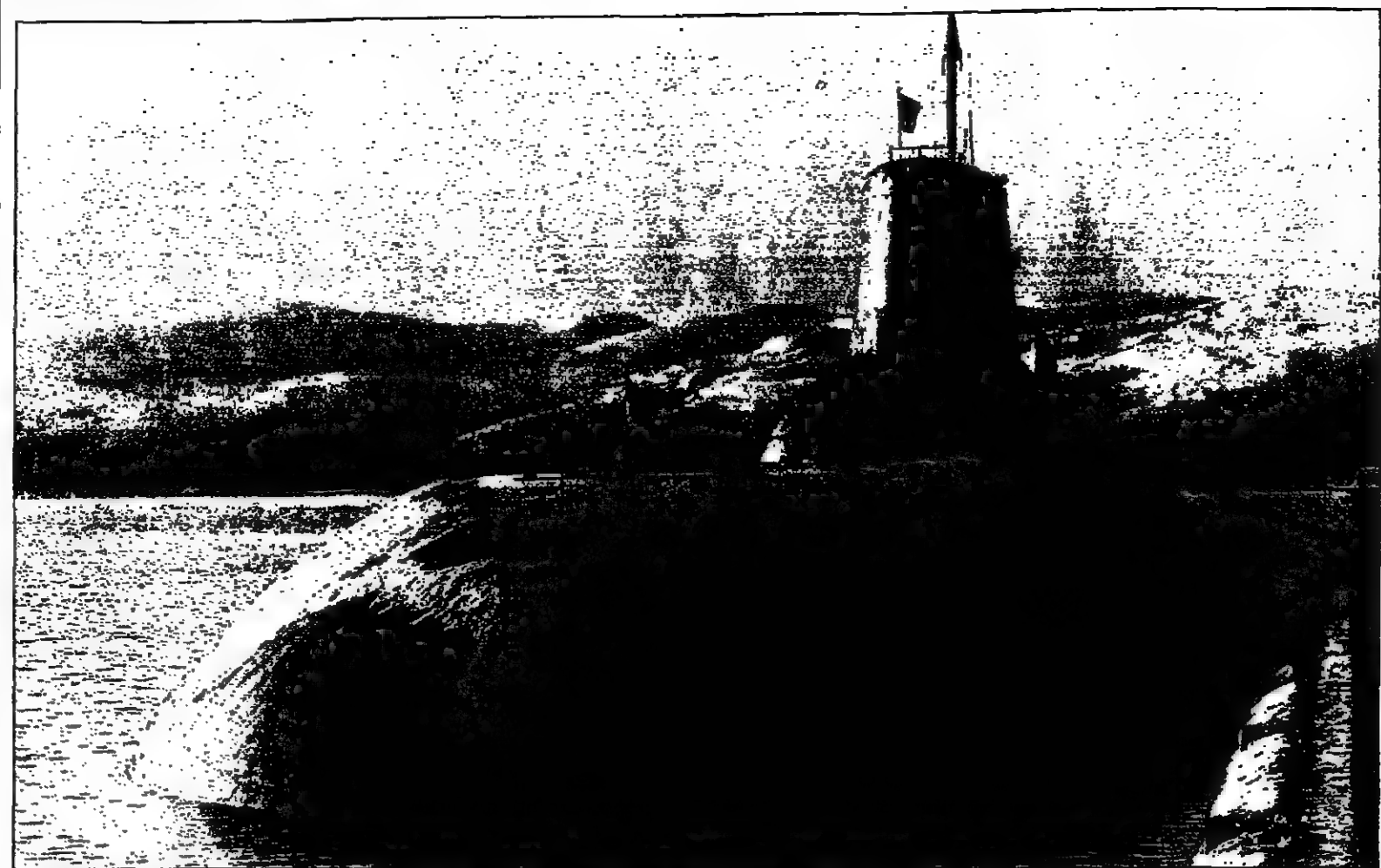
Kate Cooper, a businesswoman from Manchester, was astonished to discover a dozen bills from Los Angeles on her credit card account after she had made a trip to Florida. "I couldn't understand how my card could have been used three thousand miles away on the other side of the country at almost the same time as I was using it myself until I learnt about the fraud," she said.

Chris Tucker of Barclays Bank said that the problem emanated from the Far East where sophisticated equipment had been developed to perpetrate the fraud. British businessmen had been regular victims. "We advise cardholders not to let the 'red' out of their sight," she said. "If they are paying a restaurant bill in the Far East, they should even accompany the waiter to the till and take any carbons or spare slips from the transaction."

Banks and building societies are working jointly to counter credit card fraud and in Britain earlier this month a three-year programme costing £5 million was launched.

EC fine expected, page 20

Russian nuclear leviathan's secrets unveiled



Too big for Wembley stadium: above, the bulbous shape of the giant Typhoon on the surface; it can break through 10 ft of ice; below left, the luxury of rocking-chairs in the submariners' spacious rest and recreation room; and a view through a porthole of the engine room



LIFE on board the world's largest submarine, the Russian nuclear-powered, ballistic missile Typhoon, has been revealed for the first time (Michael Evans writes). Pictures taken on one of the six Typhoons by a Russian photographer demonstrate the former Soviet navy's conviction that "big is beautiful".

The Typhoon-class submarine dwarfs the Royal Navy's Trident ballistic missile boats, the first of which, HMS Vanguard, was rolled out to public view earlier this

month. The Typhoon is twice as fast as the Trident and more than 23 yards longer. Captain Richard Sharpe, editor of *Jane's Fighting Ships*, said: "If you picked up a Typhoon submarine and tried to put it into Wembley stadium, it wouldn't fit."

The rest and recreation room for its crew of 150 is so big there seems space enough for a badminton court. It has ultra-violet overhead lighting, potted plants and rocking chairs, unheard of in Western

Thatcher lifts the Tories' morale

Continued from page 1

ing him sedatives in his tea" and said that no party worldwide could put such a talented duo on the platform. Candidates leaving the meeting said they had a much clearer idea of the message they were to take to the nation's doorsteps.

Mrs Thatcher told them that the party "could not have chosen better" in picking Mr Major as her successor. During her speech she turned to him and said: "Your leadership is proven. It will be our most earnest endeavour to win that further period in office that we believe you need and we believe our country deserves."

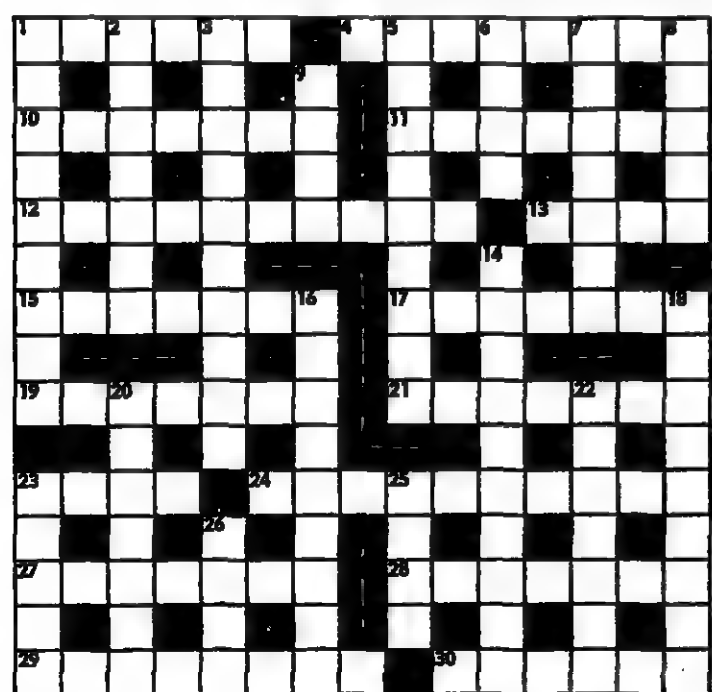
The former prime minister issued a warning that 13 years of achievement stood to be destroyed by a Labour victory, and said that Labour had not changed its spots, only its suits, and scoffed at a hung parliament or coalition government, saying that it would "hang the future of the country" with weak decision-making.

Mr Major, speaking with growing force and conviction, this time timed his assault on Labour's tax policies with a personal credo outlining a wealth-spreading Britain. He also delivered an angry attack on Labour for running down the national health service, calling them "human parasites who swoop on human error and personal tragedy and can scarce disguise their relish as they do", knowing the millions of things which went right every day but boasting of the few that did not.

Neil Kinnock will this morning take Labour's press conference in Birmingham, presenting a manifesto for reviving manufacturing industry and bringing Britain out of recession. Labour sources say that Mr Major's decision to drop his carefully planned policy of staying above the fray, particularly his decision to attack Mr Smith, has left him looking like a leader of the opposition and Mr Kinnock looking prime ministerial.

Labour sources also voiced delight at the timing of Mrs Thatcher's entry into the election battle, saying that it looked as though she was needed to add backbone to a faltering Tory campaign. Labour canvassers are reporting that the arrival of community charge bills is helping their cause by reviving grievances over the poll tax.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 18,879



ACROSS

- 1 Names a mudsnail sailor (6).
- 4 Switch positions occasionally (3,3,2).
- 10 Put out, not for the first time, about a matter of contention (7).
- 11 Attract a number to a Mediterranean island (7).
- 12 Broadcast in favour of new medical treatment (10).
- 13 One among the pirates meeting in Penzance? No (4).
- 15 He'll raise a point with a man of the cloth (7).
- 17 The little bear's allowed outside at all times (7).
- 19 A unit inordinately wrapped up in design (7).
- 21 One struggling to hold Her Majesty's dog (7).
- 23 Ready and willing to make complaint (4).

DOWN

- 2 The chef's whiskers! (3-7).
- 27 Infuriated a retired worker, being so hard (7).
- 28 She always gets a high score (7).
- 29 Fancy table for 7 (8).
- 30 Puff at this point, but hold on (6).
- 1 Quarrel a lot! Rubbish! (5-4).
- 2 Fat and foolish, said Poe (7).
- 3 The vindication for 1 ac and the answer (10).
- 5 One may produce notes on the French bean (9).
- 6 Cars negotiating bends (4).
- 7 29 gloomy — in a state? No, quite the opposite (7).
- 8 Note in winning it's all relative (5).
- 9 The enchanting creature is through with one (4).
- 14 Turning pale, proved to have had too much to drink (10).
- 16 Rogues who engage in smuggling valuable stones (9).
- 18 A bird that changes its modulation? (9).
- 20 Mean to get a beverage and be blown! (7).
- 22 To repeat: the little Italian made a meal without hesitation (7).
- 23 Though grab, the colour is uniform (5).
- 25 Broken sculpture (4).
- 26 Highly improbable (4).

PARKER DUOFOLD

The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 18,878 will appear next Saturday. The 5 winners will receive a Duofold fountain pen supplied by Parker

Concise Crossword, page 11
Life & Times section

Blustery showers in most areas. Over Scotland, north Wales and northern England especially, these will be wintry with snow on hills. The far north-west may have hail or thunder. Southern and south-eastern England will start cloudy with rain, before brighter, showery weather spreads from the north. Fresh winds everywhere, and gales in the west and north. Outlook: cold and breezy, but with brighter spells between showers. Snow on northern hills.

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Notes
London	10-12	10-15	10-15	showers
Edinburgh	8-10	10-15	10-15	showers
Belfast	8-10	10-15	10-15	showers
Cardiff	8-10	10-15	10-15	showers
Manchester	8-10	10-15	10-15	showers
Sheffield	8-10	10-15	10-15	showers
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MONDAY MARCH 23 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

Analysts believe Kinnock has a gilt-edged chance

BY ANATOLE KALETSKY
ECONOMICS EDITOR

A SURVEY of leading gilt-edged analysts conducted by *The Times* showed a substantial majority now personally expect a Labour victory. Most, however, felt the gilt-edged market as a whole was still counting on John Major's return to Downing Street.

Most analysts believe that Labour would have to raise interest rates immediately after winning an election, but few expect more than a half point rise in base rates.

The survey last week was based on the panel of 17 analysts who contributed regularly to *The Times* gilt-edged column. They represent most of the leading gilt-edged

market makers. Ten out of 17 said they expected a Labour government to emerge from a hung parliament. But asked what they thought the rest of the market expected, 14 said the City still anticipated a Tory win.

The analysts generally thought that Labour would have to raise interest rates if it won a clear victory. Only three out of 17 thought base rates would stay at 10.5 per cent if Labour won. Seven predicted 11 per cent base rates, four thought 11.5 per cent, and three 12 per cent.

By contrast, none of the panel thought interest rates would rise after a clear Tory victory and four said base rates would fall

quickly to 10 per cent. Virtually all the analysts predicted even higher interest rates in a hung parliament than after a clear Labour victory.

After the initial shock of a Labour victory, however, the prospects for interest rates appeared better. All but one analyst predicted that base rates would be at or below 10.5 per cent a year after the election, even if Labour won. But a substantial number said that a Tory chancellor would be able to cut interest rates somewhat faster than Labour, enjoying an interest rate advantage of about half a percentage point.

By the end of 1994, 14 analysts expected a difference of half a point or less between

the base rates under Tories and Labour. The panel showed broadly similar prospects for long-term interest rates. Every analyst thought ten-year gilt yields would rise under Labour, but ten believed the increase would be half a point or less.

The *Times* survey also showed widespread scepticism about Labour's tax and spending plans, with 76 per cent of the panel saying that public spending under Labour would end up "substantially higher" by 1996 than the plans announced by John Smith and other shadow ministers in the election campaign. The analysts also gave broad support to Norman Lamont's prediction that Labour would increase taxes beyond the levels announced by John

Smith last week. By 1996, income tax would be substantially higher than Mr Smith's plans, said 59 per cent of the analysts, while 70 per cent thought the general tax burden would rise substantially further under Labour.

On public borrowing, none of the analysts believed either party would achieve the sharp reduction in long-term borrowing projected by the Treasury in Mr Lamont's budget. However, 11 thought the Tories would manage to reduce public borrowing, excluding privatisation proceeds, to 3 per cent of gross domestic product by 1996, as agreed at Maastricht.

Economic View, page 21

MAN OF THE WEEK

P&O's man of war fires a salvo

Last Tuesday 40 of Britain's leading businessmen wrote to the editor of *The Times*, supporting the return of a Conservative government. Conspicuous by its absence was the name Sterling.

Had the hitherto unquestionable loyalty of the P&O chairman died with the departure of Mrs Thatcher, bestower of first knighthood and then peerage? Or was he sulking in the wake of Peter Lilley's recent rejection of his plan to merge P&O European Ferries with Sealink? Were Tory party coffers about to be short of £100,000 a year?

The speculation lasted all of 24 hours, before being laid to rest in typical style, with a leader page broadside in the *Daily Mail*. "How Labour would sink Britain's prospects", Lord Sterling was back on course.

Not there was ever much doubt. At 57, he is

enjoying the third decade of a business career that has brought him wealth, power and, latterly, influence. But success has exacted a heavy cost to his public profile. This, after all, is the man who took on and beat the seamen's union less than year after the Zeebrugge disaster and who provokes public ire by ordering a new liner from a German shipyard.

It is inevitable it is suggested that he supplies the brute force while Bruce MacPhail, his long-time business associate and P&O's managing director, supplies the intellect. Fair or not — and colleagues say he is as meticulous with the detail as he is handy with the broad brush — the duo's effectiveness will be judged again tomorrow when P&O is expected to report profits of £200 million or so.

His most urgent challenge is to unwind P&O's long-term business venture that took over Laing Properties in 1990, when a listening device was discovered in the Laing boardroom. All sides denied knowledge of it. As one associate said: "It couldn't be Jeffrey. Now, if they'd found a talking device..."

MATTHEW BOND
Reporting this week, page 20

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar
1.7007 (-0.0105)
German mark
2.8619 (+0.0076)
Exchange index
89.8 (+0.1)
Bank of England official
close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
1916.5 (-19.3)
FT-SE 100
2456.6 (-19.4)
New York Dow Jones
3276.39 (-40.48)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
20185.09 (-270.97)

1X

O&Y moves to reschedule its £5bn of debt

BY MATTHEW BOND

OLYMPIA & York, the Canadian property group that has invested over C\$3 billion in the Canary Wharf office complex in London's Docklands, is expected to move quickly this week to reassure financial markets about the state of its finances.

Executives of the group in London and Toronto spent yesterday working on a statement, which is expected to confirm that the group has reached agreement in principle with its banks for new facilities that will enable it to stabilise its troubled C\$800 million commercial paper programme. The company is also expected to confirm that the new facilities are only the first step towards an entire refinancing of the group's debts, estimated at over C\$10 billion (£5 billion). Paul Reichmann, one of the three brothers who own the private company, is understood to have been in talks with the group's banks for the last three or four weeks and has already secured agreement

for additional resources to be made available in Toronto and London.

O&Y has already retired C\$420 million of its commercial paper programme and plans to use the new facilities to retire the remaining balance of the Exchange Tower commercial paper programme as it falls due. A second commercial paper programme has been stabilised. O&Y plans to use the proceeds of the recently announced sale of a 65 per cent stake in interprovincial pipelines for US\$137 million to acquire the remaining elements of its programme as they fall due over the coming weeks.

A spokesman for O&Y admitted that the problems in the commercial paper markets had hampered its talks with its banks. "The speculation surrounding the commercial paper programme created a liquidity crisis which impeded progress in arranging additional sources of finance. With the commercial paper issues stabilised we can move forward with the

discussions with our banks and arrange additional resources. The company retains a very substantial net worth despite the impact of the recession in the United States, Canada and England on some of O&Y's developments and investments."

"Given our very strong relationships with a number of the world's leading banks we are confident that our efforts will be successful and that we will continue the process of value creation which is O&Y's hallmark."

Although it has not yet been confirmed, it is believed that JP Morgan, Lehman Brothers and Nomura are favourites to lead the refinancing.

O&Y's lead banks are Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and Citibank of America but the group is thought to have debts outstanding with up to 200 banks, including the four British clearing banks.

What form the refinancing might take is not clear at this early stage but it could involve a debt-for-equity swap. Although perceived as a secretive company, two years ago O&Y did offer for sale a 20 per cent stake in its North American property operation to institutional investors. No sale was agreed, however.

Dominion Bond Rating Service, the Canadian credit rating agency, initially downgraded O&Y's commercial paper because of the fall in the value of the quoted investments on which the programme was secured. These were O&Y's holdings in Trizec, the North American property group, Trilon, the financial services group, and GW Utilities, GW Utilities, which is 89 per cent owned by O&Y, sold its stake in Interprovincial, a pipeline group, to help fund the rising level of redemptions on the paper issue.

This rapid increase in redemptions forced Dominion to downgrade the paper programme again towards the end of last week, as holders of the paper rushed to redeem it. Confidence in the group has been falling, as the worldwide recession affects all its activities.

Canary Wharf is likely to be blamed for much of O&Y's financial problems. The C\$3 billion O&Y has invested in the early phases of the project has largely come from existing bank facilities and lines of credit. But refinancing the investment has proved difficult as bankers lose confidence in property assets,

Besieged Steetley defiant

RIMON WALKER



Manning the barricades: David Donne says Redland's offer is still too cheap

DAVID Donne, chairman of Steetley, the building materials group, remains confident of seeing off the £600 million-plus share-on-cash approach from Redland, which closes at 1pm on Thursday.

The City view is that Redland looks set to achieve a narrow victory. Well informed sources close to Steetley admit that the building materials group looks very hard pressed, but stressed that it is not over yet.

Mr Donne said: "Steetley fights on. Redland's revised offer is too cheap and in reality is no increase at all. The exit multiple on normalised earnings totally fails to recognise its market position and the cost savings achieved."

Steetley is still making presentations, but the prospect of cash for sector pessimists' impatient for the recovery, or shares for those hoping for a recovery, may be enough to tip the balance Redland's way.

Both share prices were easier last week, apparently as speculators bought into Steetley in the expectation that the bid would succeed and went short in Redland.

John Charcol's Double Whammy.

A mortgage rate of 9.95% - and it's fixed for ten full years.

12%
Typical APR

Over the last ten years, the mortgage rate has averaged out at over 12.5% — and there has not been a single year in which the average has fallen below 11%.

Yet we can now provide a loan which is guaranteed not to rise above 9.95% (12% APR) at any time in the next ten years. It's fixed right through to July 2002.

And equally important, this unique mortgage is fully portable — so you can take it with you if you move in the future.

In today's uncertain world, we simply cannot see why anyone would choose any other kind of mortgage.

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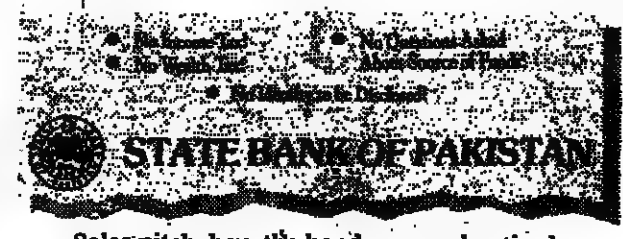
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Pakistan is asked to stop bond sale

BY NEIL BENNETT IN LONDON
AND ZAHID HUSSAIN IN KARACHI

PAKISTAN'S central bank has cancelled a worldwide issue of high-interest bonds following pressure from the Federal Reserve and the Bank of England. The action follows fears that the confidential bonds would be used by drug dealers and arms traders to launder money.

Bank of England officials contacted the State Bank of Pakistan on Friday to ask them to withdraw its issue of foreign currency bearer certificates. A Bank spokesman said they did not appear to comply with Banking Act regulations. The State Bank is not a registered deposit



Sales pitch: how the bonds were advertised

taker in Britain. In America, the Fed raised Pakistani banks on Friday and ordered them to halt the bond sale.

The action was taken after the state bank advertised the five-year bonds in the *Financial Times* and *The Economist*. The adverts promised "no income tax", "no questions about the source of funds" and "no identity to be disclosed".

The multi-currency bonds also offered unusually high interest rates, of 11.75 per cent in sterling, 10.25 per cent in marks and 8.75 per cent in dollars. The Bank of England was concerned the bonds would contravene its recent initiative against money laundering.

The adverts say the issue is being organised through a series of authorised banks,

including Deutsche Bank, Chase Manhattan and Standard Chartered. But a spokesman for Standard Chartered yesterday denied any knowledge of the issue.

Pakistan's government admitted in a statement that the sale of the bonds was launched without clearance of the American Securities and Exchange Commission. However, Pakistani finance ministry officials denied the bond was offered as a device to launder drug money.

The State Bank was hoping to raise up to \$100 million to ease the government's troubled financial position. The bond issue was aimed at expatriate Pakistanis to allow them to repatriate foreign funds.

Wellcome appoints firms to place shares in £4bn sale

By KAREN WOOLFSON

THE Wellcome Trust has started to appoint investment houses to place shares worldwide in a planned £4 billion sell off of its holding in Wellcome plc, the British pharmaceutical group.

Goldman Sachs is frontrunner to place shares in North America, which represents 44 per cent of group sales but only 2 per cent of the total equity.

Wellcome wants share distribution to mirror sales of its products more closely, putting a heavy emphasis on the North American tranche

of the international share offer.

Nomura is the frontrunner to place shares in Japan: its pharmaceutical analyst was unable to comment. John Reeve of Daiwa, another potential player in the share offer, said: "Wellcome certainly matches Japanese interest in growth stocks and they are naturally attracted to pharmaceutical companies. They see it as an industry of the future."

Robert Fleming, the global co-ordinator for the planned international offering and ad-

viser to the trustees, will be responsible for placing shares in the United Kingdom.

Baring Brothers, adviser to Wellcome, has already secured one or two regions for share distribution outside the United Kingdom but is negotiating for more.

Talks on distribution in continental Europe are continuing, with groups such as Crédit Lyonnais, which is strong in France, and Deutsche Bank, which is strong in Germany, expected to take some sort of role in the offer.

City analysts expect the share offer to be partly in the form of a placing, with a larger proportion placed with institutions than would be the case if it were a government privatisation.

Mr Reeve said: "The interest here is not in wider share ownership but in maximising return, so retail investors are not a high priority. They will only be brought into the offer to the extent that they help maximise returns."

Groups already chosen to distribute Wellcome shares are sounding out the interest in their appointed regions. The timing of the proposed offer is not yet clear, although Wellcome has said July is the first date it is likely to be able to achieve. City analysts believe the sell off will not go ahead before the late summer.

The Wellcome Trust must first obtain authority from the court to reduce its holding in Wellcome plc from its present 73.6 per cent to below 50 per cent.

Michael Watt, investor relations manager at Wellcome plc, said the process has started. Trustees cannot sell further shares in Wellcome plc unless the original will of Sir Henry Wellcome is changed, and without obtaining the consent of the charity commissioners.

EC fine for price fixing expected

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE European Commission is this week expected to fine a French credit card group and Eurocheque International for fixing their transaction prices in France.

The fine will be the first punishment meted out to the banking sector by Sir Leon Brittan, the competition commissioner, and comes only a week after Brussels issued its "users' charter", which warns banks and financial institu-

tions to lower their charges to small companies and individuals or face the consequences.

Commission sources say Sir Leon originally wanted a fine of about £7 million. It now appears that Christine Scrivenner, the French tax commissioner, has intervened and the penalty could be less. Sir Leon's competition investigators have found that Eurocheque, the principal international cheque company in Europe, and the French Groupement des Cartes Bancaires, comprising 11 of France's largest financial institutions, met in Helsinki in 1983 and agreed that Cartes Bancaires transaction charges should be no less than those on Eurocheques.

The commission has ruled this a "particularly serious restriction on competition". Although Eurocheque and Cartes Bancaires disavowed their Helsinki agreement last year, the two groups continue to co-operate and are looking into exclusive arrangements for Eurocheque credit cards to be used in Cartes Bancaires cash machines.

French banking institutions are moving away from cheques and Eurocheque is widely expected to follow suit: international cheques are becoming increasingly costly for banks to administer.

The commission has found that Eurocheque had a relatively low market share in France, where banks have made it difficult for clients to obtain the international cheques. Last week, the commission warned banks that they must make details of how long their transactions take and what they cost available to clients. Sir Leon believes that normal market forces, with clients shopping around for the best deals, will drive bank charges down.

However, the commission has also considered setting tariffs of charges for banks, and further investigations into practices in individual member states are expected.

Bogus cards, page 1

C&G ready to take over society

By LINDRAY COOK MONEY EDITOR

THE three-branch Mid-Sussex building society is to be taken over by the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society in August if members agree. The £24 million Mid-Sussex incurred a loss of £46,000 last year after making provisions for losses.

The 4,592 investors will receive a bonus of 2.25 per cent on their savings and the 590 borrowers will have their mortgage rate reduced by 0.5 per cent for 12 months after the merger.

Members of the Mid-Sussex will vote at its annual meeting on April 23 and C&G members will vote six days later at its meeting.

Derek Scott, chairman of the Mid-Sussex, said: "It is becoming increasingly difficult for small building societies such as ours to compete effectively in our chosen market. We are often unable, or not even legally entitled, to offer our members the range of services now available through larger societies."

Andrew Longhurst, chief executive of the C&G, said last month that he did not want to be involved in the rescue of any more societies. The proposed merger does not fall into that category, a spokeswoman said.



Best foot forward: shoe retailers need to take steps to beat competition as the outlook remains gloomy

Footwear sector struggles for profit

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

MAKING money in the footwear market has become increasingly difficult since the mid-1980s, with too many footwear retailers competing in a market where cheap imports are growing, according to Verdict, the market research group.

A report says the market needs a casualty to reduce shop numbers and ease competition in the high street. There are more than 11,300 specialist shoe shops trading at present, after a 5 per cent decline in the Eighties.

In volume terms, the footwear market was broadly static between 1986 and 1989.

Since then, it has fallen with increasing momentum. As a result of these trends, footwear's share of consumer spending has diminished steadily over the past decade. In 1983 it accounted for 1.23 per cent, but by 1991 this had fallen to 0.98 per cent. Last year, consumer spending on footwear fell 4.5 per cent in real terms.

The main reason for the sector's declining share of consumer spending is low inflation. Driving this has been the rising importance of inexpensive imported shoes and shoe components. In 1984, imports accounted for

58 per cent of supplies and by 1990, this was 69 per cent.

British Shoe Corporation, part of Sears, is the largest footwear retailer. It owns Saxe, Dolcis, Freeman Hardy and Willis, Manfield, Lilley & Skinner and Shoe City. It has been reorganising and closing underperforming stores. As a result, its market share has fallen from 25 per cent in 1984 to 18.3 per cent last year.

Next largest is Clarks with 8 per cent of the market. Marks and Spencer, which has 5.8 per cent, is third. These three retailers account

for a third of all sales in a market that is still dominated by independent outlets.

Verdict says the outlook for 1992 is gloomy for the footwear market and there is little evidence that it will benefit much even if there is a recovery in the economy.

The report says: "Over the Eighties, footwear prices have risen at about two-thirds of the rate of retail prices as a whole and at its most simple, this is not a viable situation if it is repeated in the Nineties. Either prices or volumes must rise or a number of companies will cease to function."

Wall Street salaries back at \$5m a year

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

WALL Street profits reached a record last year, sending the pay of some top New York investment bankers back to the \$5 million-a-year levels they enjoyed before the crash five years ago.

Huge share trading volumes, an avalanche of new issues and sharp cuts in interest rates have dramatically transformed the fortunes of the top 315 firms in just 12 months.

In 1990, they lost a combined \$162 million. Last year, profits reached \$5.9 billion, \$300 million more than earlier estimates and almost \$400 million over the previous record set in 1986.

Analysts are forecasting 1992 could be another record

year. Jeffrey Schaefer, research director for the Securities Industry Association, said: "January was probably the strongest month in the securities industry's history. It is quite remarkable."

The wealth will also be shared by fewer people. Since the crash, Wall Street has increased staff by only 2 per cent, putting employment at 214,000, 18 per cent lower than 1987.

While much of American industry is still caught in recession, analysts expect investment bank and stockbroker salaries to show sharp increases when the details are revealed in annual pay statements later this spring.

Bundestag agrees to cut banks

By COLIN NARBROUGH

THE Bundestag, lower house of the German parliament, has approved for the second time a measure to cut the number of regional central banks in Germany by two, to nine. The bill now goes to the upper house, which rejected a similar attempt to change the central banking system in November. The upper house is not, however, expected to be able to produce the two-thirds majority necessary to block the bill this time.

The Bundestag has opposed demands from the eastern Länder for five new regional central banks to join the existing 11. The bill foresees only the large states having their own regional central banks.

Retailers push for Gatt resolution

By PHILIP PANGALOS

BRITISH retailers and their textile and clothing suppliers are pressing for a successful conclusion to the Uruguay round of negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade amid growing fears that the talks will end in failure.

A joint statement from the British Retail Consortium and the Apparel, Knitting and Textiles Alliance calls on the government, the European Community and Gatt to ensure agreement.

Both say a successful conclusion to the round is essential and call for a "stable and predictable" framework for world trade.

They say agreement would provide a satisfactory and cer-

tain basis for forward business, planning, with a framework for trade that guards against the risk of a slide into international trade conflict.

They added that a successful conclusion would provide measures that went some way towards providing fairer terms of international competition, including better access for British manufacturers to export markets.

They said further delay in reaching agreement increased the risk of a breakdown in negotiations, jeopardising supply agreements for periods beyond the end of this year, when present world textile trade regulatory arrangements expire.



Jenkins determination

Tony de Gulingand, former managing director of the London traded options market, becomes finance director of Liffe. David Burton, chairman of Liffe for the past four years, is due to step down this summer.

Growth comes under pressure at Kingfisher

POOR retailing conditions are likely to result in a small decline in full-year profits at Kingfisher, the retailing and property group, which is headed by Geoff Mulcahy. Pre-tax profits, due on Wednesday, are expected to slip to £205 million, against £215 million last time, according to Nick Bubb, at Morgan Stanley. Market forecasts range from £205 million to £215 million.

Mr Bubb said: "Growth is under pressure. The major profit engines are running out of steam and they need a major acquisition."

The second half should have seen some progress at Woolworth and Superdrug, but B&Q, the do-it-yourself chain, will have come under pressure from Texas, while Comet may even suffer a small loss. Lower interest charges will offer a fall in property profits.

TODAY

Argos, the catalogue showroom retailer, is expected to see its final pre-tax profits decline to about £62 million, against £75 million last time, according to Morgan Stanley. Market forecasts range from £60 million to £65 million.

Interims: Community Hospitals Group, Kleinwort Development Fund, Lloyd Thompson Group, Merivale Moore, TR High Income

Trust. Final: Aran Energy, Argos, Astac (BSR), Benrose Corporation, Brent Chemicals International (W), Clarendon Garments, EOC Group, Eri Group, Hibernian Insurance, Hongkong Land Holdings, Hungrarian Investment Co, Isle of Man Steam Packet Co, Linrad, P-E International, Rotork, Sharpe & Fisher, Spring Ram Corporation, Woodchester Investments.

TOMORROW

UBS Phillips & Drew believes final pre-tax profits at the Prudential Corporation, Britain's biggest life insurer, will rise from £261.3 million to £312 million. Market forecasts range from £278 million to £329 million.

P&O, the shipping, construction and property group, is expected to see its annual pre-tax profits fall to between £185 million and £250 million, against £261 million last time. Most forecasts are between £185 million and £210 million.

Interims: Amber Day Holdings, Tay Homes, Wolsley, Final: Barr & Wallace Arnold Trust, Brake Bros, Brodero Properties, Bridon, Colorgraphic, Cussins Property Group, Derwent Valley Holdings, EBC Group, Edinburgh Oil & Gas, Electrolux AB, Epsin Group, Fairhaven International, Geest, Goal Petroleum, Iceland Frozen Foods, Invergordon Distillers, Laporta, Mallett, Pen-dragon, P&O, Prudential Corporation, TT Group, Wood (Arthur) & Son.

Economic statistics: Capital



Decline expected: Kingfisher's Geoff Mulcahy

expenditure and stockbuilding (fourth quarter - revised company liquidity (fourth quarter).

WEDNESDAY

Andrew Porter, at Nikko, the Japanese securities house, expects strong growth, largely from acquisitions, to enable

full-year profits at Medeva, the pharmaceuticals group, to advance to £15 million (£4 million). He forecasts earnings per share of 6.8p (3.4p) and a dividend of 1.25p (0.75p).

County NatWest expects Hepworth, the building ma-

terials and home products company, to report a 21 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £71 million, as the group's British operations suffer downturns on a number of fronts.

Reckitt & Colman, the food to pharmaceuticals group, will find that demand for its consumer products in Britain and America has been hit by the recession. Kleinwort Benson expects final pre-tax profits to climb to £255 million, against £235.2 million.

The recession is likely to push final pre-tax profits at Cookson Group, the industrial materials group, down from £97.5 million to £45 million, according to Nigel Utley, at Credit Lyonnais.

Forecasts range from £39 million to £45 million. Interims: Barrat Developments, Bridport-Gundry, Burn Stewart Distillers, Frogmore Estates, I&S Optimum Income Trust (third quarter), Pressac Holdings, Town Centre Securities. Final: Bod-dington Group, British Alcan Aluminium, Clifford Foods, CMB Packaging, Cookson Group, Dolphin Packaging, Gibbs and Dandy, Hepworth, Jardine Matre-son Holdings, Kingfisher, Lam-berth, Lloyds Bank, Lomo, Medeva, Micro Focus Group, Microvitec, Oriel Group, Page (Michael) Group, Reckitt & Col-man, Richardson Westgarth.

Economic statistics: Building societies' monthly figures (February); construction - new orders (January - provisional).

THURSDAY

UBS Phillips & Drew expects

United Newspapers, the publisher of the Daily Express, Sunday Express and Daily Star, to show pre-tax profits of £84 million, against £95.7 million. Market forecasts range from £80 million to £84 million.

Wellcome indicated that its interim pre-tax profits would not be less than £235 million (£181.2 million) at the time of the announcement of Wellcome Trust's decision to place a significant part of its 73.6 per cent holding in the pharmaceuticals group.

Interims: Gleeson (MJ) Group, Kalamazoo, Micklegate Group, Murray Ventures, MY Holdings, Wellcome. Final: Appleyard Group, APV, Booker, Bostrom, Boustead, Bunzl, Burford Holdings, Burnham Control, Clarkson (Horace), Coats Viyella, Jardine Strategic Holdings, Jeyes Group, Monument Oil and Gas, Morrison (Wm) Supermarkets, Plasmeac, Seaford Resources, Secura Trust Group, Sheffield Insulations, Slough Estates, Spear (JW) & Sons, Tibbett & Britten Group, United Newspapers, Weir Group, Wolstenholme Link.

Economic statistics: Insurance and pensions (fourth quarter); new vehicle registrations (February); energy trends (January).

FRIDAY

Interims: SENTRY Farming Group. Final: Spenon, HTV Group, Murray Spill, Capital Trust, Fortmation, Pottery, Relyon Group, TR Far East Income Trust, Economic Statistics: CBI monthly trends enquiry (March).

PHILIP PANGALOS

THE TIMES

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Interest fears from Labour

Week two of the campaign has arrived and in the stock market, so far so good. Or is it? There is little sign as yet that share prices have been adjusting to Labour's lead in the opinion polls. Despite a Labour shadow budget that either confirmed or introduced a number of factors that are negative for shares, the FT-SE 100 index reacted only modestly, finishing the week down a mere 19 points, a fall of well under 1 per cent. There is increasing evidence from the opinion polls that the City's long-held belief in a narrow Conservative victory should now be regarded as questionable. All is still to play for, but shareholders would be wise to build a higher probability of a non-Tory administration into their forecasting.

There were a few signs, but not many, that this process had begun last week, especially in the weakness of stocks in the privatised utilities. So far, the market reaction has been curiously subdued. Partly this stems from the inactivity of institutions, so far reluctant to call the election result either way. But even in the absence of substantial trading volume, the much-vaunted pricing mechanism of efficient markets should by now be reflecting the higher probability of a hung parliament and even of a narrow Labour majority.

The most obvious, yet so far little discussed, danger to equity valuations is that the finances of a Labour government or Lib-Lab dominated hung parliament will fail to win the approval of overseas holders of sterling and gilt-edged stock. Memories of the late Seventies, when so-called buyers' strikes in the government bond market undermined official funding, are by no means dead. Holders of gilts and sterling quite reasonably required higher interest rates as compensation for holding increasingly risky securities and eventually the process was checked by courtesy of the IMF.

On the basis of both the official and shadow budgets, funding government spending over the next few years looks problematic anyway. The scale of proposed government borrowing is a problem common to both major parties. This will be especially true if the heroic assumptions made by the Treasury (and not disputed by the shadow chancellor) of a sharp recovery in the economy over the next year or two fail to materialise. But a Labour chancellor would face added difficulties in keeping the bond markets and foreign exchanges sweet.

Labour may have moderated its earlier plans to take back into public ownership many of the companies privatised under the Tories. But, more to the point, it is unlikely to sell off what remains under state control. This excludes a source of revenue which will be badly needed in the next few years. The financing problems would be more acute in the middle and later year of a Labour administration when the leaders would come under increasing pressure to deliver on public spending pledges made in recent years. A Labour chancellor will also face pressure from his own colleagues to release for current spending the proceeds of council house sales, adding further to government borrowing needs. Faced with gross government borrowing fast heading towards £50 billion, the markets are likely to force higher interest rates on a Labour chancellor, creating problems for his plans to stimulate industrial recovery and straining investor perception of Labour's commitment to resist a devaluation of sterling.

If the prospect of higher interest rates under Labour has not been taken aboard by the stock market, nor has the fact that new equity issues will suffer some crowding out due to government calls on the gilt market. With institutional cash flow growing only slowly, gilt sales will pre-empt a much larger slice of the cake in the current year and thereafter.

Anatole Kalitsky asks why when a Labour poll victory could produce a financial collapse, the City is curiously silent

It is off to Neil Kinnock and John Smith. As today's straw poll in *The Times* demonstrates, even in the City they are now widely tipped as Britain's next prime minister and Chancellor. Punitive taxes would still deny Mr Kinnock an absolute majority, especially if the Liberal Democrats can put themselves across in Liberal-Tory negotiations as the party that can defend the middle class and rein in Labour after the Conservatives are gone.

After 13 years of Tory rule, even the remote possibility of an expropriative Labour government might have struck terror in the City and the business establishment. Yet financial markets have been broadly stable. Investors have said they would actually prefer a clear Labour victory to a hung parliament and businessmen have confined themselves to nostalgic reminiscences about the great economic achievements of the Eighties, which are now allegedly under threat.

Why have the Labour party's opponents not tried a more direct assault? Despite the generally sanguine views of City analysts, it is all too probable that a Labour victory would trigger a collapse of financial business and consumer confidence, at least in the short term.

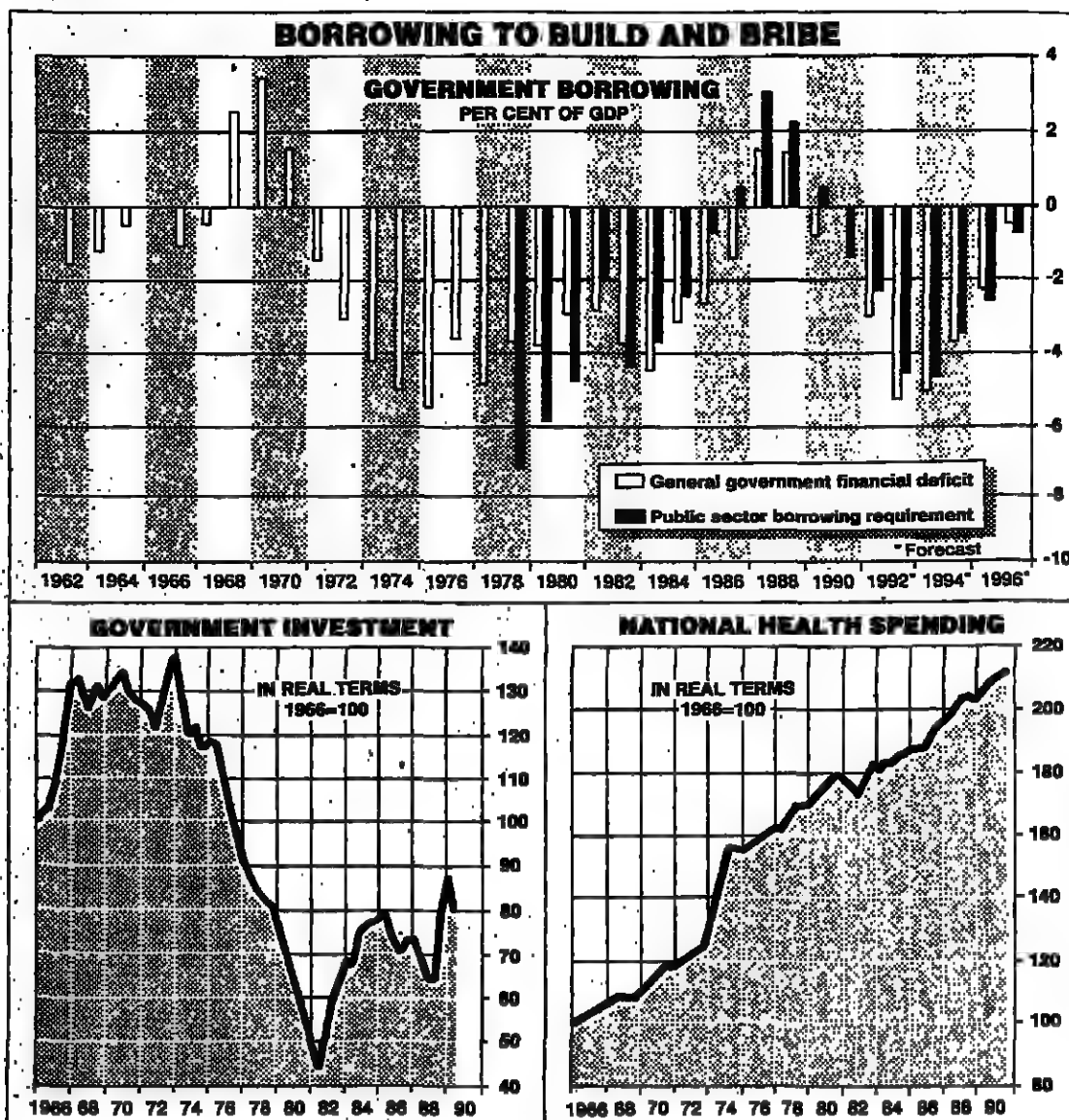
This would prolong the recession and throw hundreds of thousands of people out of work. Why is this message not being shouted from the rooftops by the Tories and their friends in the City and business community?

The answer comes down to the three initials that will be inscribed on John Major's political gravestone if he loses this election: ERM.

The government has made an ungodly mess of economic management, but the main reason for its economic failure — the decision to enter the ERM at the wrong time and the wrong exchange rate — has commanded almost unanimous support from the City, the business and, crucially, Labour.

Until a few weeks ago, Labour support for ERM membership looked like a political as well as an economic mistake. As evidenced in Mr Smith's shadow budget last week, the ERM commitment deprives Labour of any alternative economic strategy, except for the atavistic "soak the successful" socialism of his tax proposals. If the Tories had made even a half-decent list of running the economy, the ERM would have reduced Labour to unconvincing me-tooism on every economic issue except for taxation. But the recession has destroyed

How Thatcher and Major have given Labour room to manoeuvre



the Tories' reputation for economic competence and reduced them to silence on the macroeconomic prospect. Having staked their reputation on promises of a spontaneous economic recovery produced by the low inflation imported from the ERM, the Tories cannot afford to draw public attention to a very real possibility that the recession will go on and on.

The City analysts, having maintained that ERM membership would guarantee a political financial stability, cannot now turn around and argue that Labour would precipitate the financial crisis.

With the threat of an immediate financial crash or a lengthy depression neutralised in terms of political rhetoric, if not of economic reality, the Tories have had to aim their economic attack at a more distant target. The new target is the long-term cost of a Labour government which would allegedly amount to the equivalent of ten pence on the basic rate of income tax by 1996.

But here again, the government will find its fire deflected by the ERM.

Even if Mr Lamont's costings of Labour spending policies were valid, the task of raising the money would

be far less daunting than he maintains. For the Tories' own policies have given Labour the means to borrow and spend to their hearts content.

By slashing the national debt under Mrs Thatcher, then joining the ERM and signing up to the deficit guidelines agreed at the Maastricht summit, the Conservatives have created unprecedented leeway for a future Labour government to pursue a socialist agenda of public spending, borrowing and even renationalisation.

First, Mrs Thatcher reduced Britain's public debt from 55 per cent of gross domestic product in 1980 to 36 per cent in 1990, by far the lowest level among the major countries of Europe.

Then, Mr Major cemented Labour's advantage by joining the ERM and staying in, in spite of the obvious political costs.

The Tories' inadvertent effort to ease the spending constraints on future Labour governments culminated in the Maastricht summit with the guidelines agreed for public borrowing ahead of European monetary union.

Potential members of EMU un-

dertook, from 1996 onwards, to try to keep their structural budget deficits below 3 per cent of GDP and their national debt below 60 per cent. These guidelines, which seemed exceedingly strict for Italy, Belgium and even Germany, were actually very generous by the standards of Thatcherite Britain. By simply accepting EMU and the Maastricht agreement as the lodestars of Britain's public finances, Labour can now justify £20 billion more public spending and borrowing than the Tories.

For while Mr Major remains agnostic on EMU and pledges his loyalty to the original Thatcherite aim of cutting public deficit to zero, the Maastricht terms would allow Labour to continue borrowing profusely even after the recession ends. In 1992-3 money, the Maastricht 3 per cent of GDP is worth almost £20 billion, equivalent to half the cost of the national health service or 9p off the standard rate of tax.

But there was even more good news for Labour in the fine print of Maastricht. The summit also settled on a new definition of public borrowing, extremely favourable to renationalisation. Instead of focusing on the public sector borrowing requirement, an accounting concept

that was humiliatingly imposed on Denis Healey by the hard men from the International Monetary Fund, the Maastricht terms introduced a new definition of borrowing, or rather reverted to a much older one, the general government financial deficit.

The GGFD conforms with the practice on the Continent, where state-owned commercial enterprises are totally separated from the government in the public account. It differs from the PSBR in two crucial respects: it excludes privatisation proceeds, reducing the financial incentive for a Labour government to sell off state assets, and it also omits market borrowing by nationalised industries.

As a result of this change, the Treasury's traditional obsession with placing limits on borrowing and investment by nationalised industries, will be rendered irrelevant. One of the main financial arguments for privatisation and against renationalisation will, therefore, be neutralised at a stroke.

Of course, the money Labour borrowed for its spending plans and nationalised industry investment would still have to come from the financial market, whether it fell within Maastricht guidelines or not. But as the time for EMU approached, Labour would find itself borrowing from a European wide pool of savings and would, therefore, be less constrained by the financial resources and political prejudices of British investment institutions.

These happy prospects are not assured, or even very likely. Confidence in the ERM might not outlast the election. A Labour victory could trigger a run on the pound and a hike in interest rates, or a devaluation. Without a devaluation, unemployment would stay stubbornly high and deficit spending could eventually produce a balance of payments crisis. Nevertheless, if Mr Kinnock managed to navigate successfully through the next year or two, economic recovery would eventually gather pace and Labour could start to look like a natural party of government.

If that ever happened, Mr Kinnock should spare a grateful thought for John Major and Margaret Thatcher.

By joining the ERM and signing the Maastricht treaty Mr Major accepted a continental political and fiscal culture which guaranteed a very large role for the public sector. By spending North Sea oil revenues and privatisation proceeds on debt repayments instead of new public investment, Mrs Thatcher lifted one of the main constraints on Labour's ambitions as well as alienating many voters.

Far from squandering the riches of the North Sea, she invested them for the benefit of future socialist governments. The old political adage was never truer. Oppositions do not win elections, governments lose them.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

From Russia with money

SMITH New Court, long proud of its links with leading South African gold mining houses, has struck up a warm relationship with the republic's former arch-enemy — Russia. Several high-ranking officials and advisers from the former Soviet Union have, it seems, been beating a path to the firm's door, and SNC has been quick to capitalise on what it sees as a good opportunity. Only last week, Sir Michael Richardson, chairman of SNC, and Michael Marks, its chief executive, hosted a lunch for 40 City institutions in honour of Boris Fedorov, one of President Yeltsin's most trusted economic advisers. "We were left with a growing feeling that political stability in the region will continue," says Gordon Muir-Carby, head of central European research and investment. "A new market is opening with a population of 260 million and the world's largest oil and natural gas resources." Dr Fedorov is neither the first nor the last Russian to call in for lunch. The Russian ambassador is due next month. Past guests include President Gorbachev's former investment adviser and the head of the KGB.

The whole truth?

THE truth, but not quite the whole truth? On the front cover of a post-Budget 24-page *Assured Tenancy Bulletin*, published by Johnson Fry, a banner headline states: "No Budget Changes in BES". The smaller print beneath begins: "In line with



"He's probably something in the City"

our recent thinking, the Chancellor made no changes in BES as far as the investor is concerned." Strange, at best, given that the Chancellor clearly stated that he would be abolishing the entire Business Expansion Scheme in 12 months' time.

Brain gain

ONE has to hand it to Robert Fleming. For the second year running, the firm has taken first place in an annual "brain game" to raise money for Youth Clubs UK, a charity for young people. Quite unnerved by the prospect of answering questions on food and drink, films and the like — far removed from the usual City world of dealing screens and wine bars — the team from Fleming came home by a narrow margin, beating Herbert Fenwick & Willan, the City solicitor, by one point, and BAT Industries by two points. Their efforts have raised £12,500 towards the charity.

THE UK editor of *Future Events News Service*, an agency that lists upcoming events for journalists, is a certain Kevin Maxwell.

Newborn training

BY the time Debby Park returns to work as a member of the newborn special risks team at Sedgwick — unveiled this week — she should be well prepared for the task ahead. For Park, aged 31, whose husband Andrew, aged 29, also works at Europe's largest insurance broker, will bring with her the experience of her own newborn special risk: their daughter, Robyn Charlotte, who weighed in at 7lb 10oz at Pembury in Kent on Wednesday. Park, an associate director, will join Lani Bannach and Brian Richardson on the special risks team, which is to be headed by Guy Townley, development director, and aims to strengthen links between Sedgwick's offices in London and on the Continent. Meanwhile, Park's proud husband plans to make the most of the cross-benefits of fatherhood and his own job within Sedgwick's international casualty division: he intends to learn Portuguese and French alongside his daughter. His wife, who spent many of her formative years in Portugal, is determined to provide them both with a multi-lingual education.

Return to roots

STEPHEN Fielding, the barrister-turned-banker, has returned to the legal world as business development director of Titmuss Sainer & Webb, the City law firm. The position is unusual for a law firm, but indicative of a new

pro-marketing trend in the legal world. Fielding, aged 40, joins the firm from Midland Bank, at which he was deputy chief executive of its personal asset management business and a director of Midland's trust company. Insisting that his departure has nothing to do with Midland's proposed merger with Hongkong and Shanghai Bank — "But I do think it is very good news," he says — Fielding points out that he began his career, post-Oxford, as a barrister, and did his pupillage at Lincoln's Inn. The co-author of a book on the Consumer Credit Act — *Consumer Credit: A Working Hand-Book to Truth in Lending* — which has sold 1,000 copies, and also, as his name might suggest, an ardent cricket fan — "That one was flogged to death at school," he says with a wince — he has returned to his roots in more ways than one. Titmuss Sainer's offices, in the Inner Temple, are just 250 yards from the former site of City of London School, where Fielding was once a pupil.

Home run

HITCHING a lift on the election bandwagon, Thornton, the confectioner, is hurriedly making 25p jellies moulded into the likeness of Messrs Major, Kinnock, Ashdown and Screaming Lord Sutch — all in party colours. The firm, which went public during the Thatcher years, hopes the gimmick will stimulate pre-Easter sales. However, it concedes it will do nothing for exports — not even a boxful will head for its French shops.

CAROL LEONARD

STEETLEY

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Tel: 0788 535621

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This advertisement was placed by the Newspaper Publishers Association.

FLEET CARS

The fleet sails back in

As the Fleet Car Show opens at Silverstone, Kevin Eason considers the value of company purchasing

I worried fleet executives have spent the last four years wondering whether the government was intent on driving their industry out of business, then there was some comfort for them at last in the Budget.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, took his foot off the brake that has stopped the motor business in its tracks to offer company car users some of the help they have been demanding.

Company car drivers were becoming like rabbits caught in the Mr Lamont's financial headlights, trapped by rising tax demands and unable to replace ageing models because of the recession.

The Budget announcement that company car scale charges, which determine the benefit to the user of a car provided by the employer, would only rise by inflation this year was no concession.

It was, however, enough to take anxiety away from the faces of most company car users, who have been startled by a tenfold increase in charges over the past decade. Between 1983 and the end of the 1991 financial year, charges rose from £360 a year to £3,250, with the rate of increase accelerating particularly quickly in the past four years.

Drivers will be able to

choose bigger-engined and bigger-bodied cars but with lower specifications, good news for embattled manufacturers like Jaguar which produces big, luxurious saloons at prices below Mercedes-Benz and BMW, its main rivals.

Manufacturers may scrap cars which were originally designed to appeal to company car drivers, usually cars with engines under 1.6-litres but packed with "goodies" such as a sunroof, electric windows and expensive stereo which all raised the value of the model.

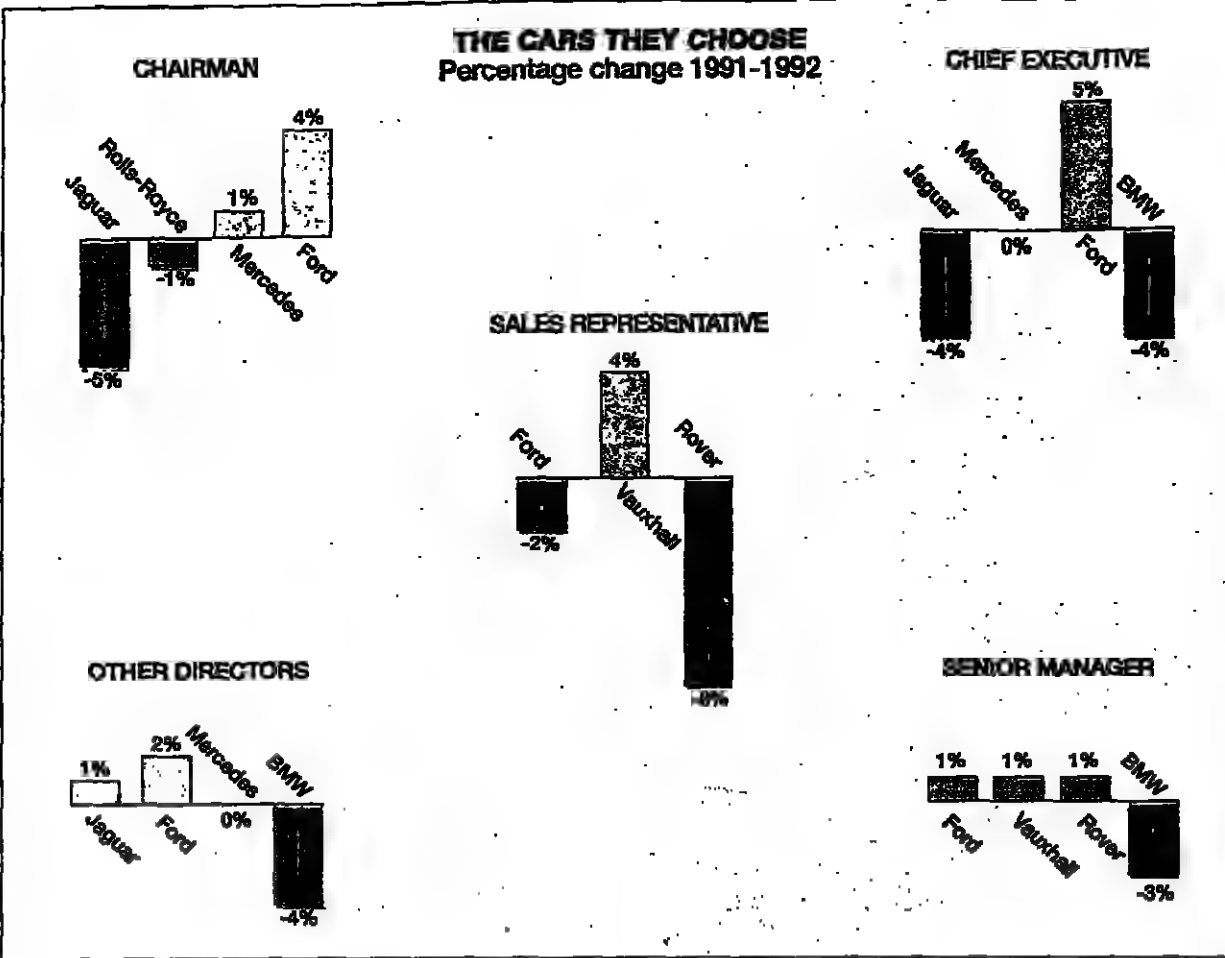
That could mean the demise of models like Rover's 214GSi, the Astra CDi and Orion 1.4i Ghia, all cars with high specifications priced at about £12,000 but small engines which at the moment fall neatly into the Treasury's lowest scale charge threshold.

Little is likely to happen, however, until after April 9 when motor manufacturers and the fleet industry know the election result.

The company car is a key element of each party's strategy for transport, with each committed in some way to curbing the use of "perks".

The thinking is directed at protecting the environment and easing some of the huge congestion on Britain's roads. Consumer groups have also pointed an accusing finger at fleet sales which are signed at big discounts at the expense of private customers who have to pay more as a result.

The attack on company cars is based on the notion that Britain is obsessed with them. Yet there is no evidence that Britain depends that much more on the company car than any other nation.



Nor can much credence be given to the notion that everyone who has a company car is somehow the beneficiary of some sly gift. About 80 per cent of company cars are used as tools of the trade and, according to a study of company car policy by the Manks Partnership, 62 per cent of company car users drive more than 10,000 miles a year; 10 per cent more than 15,000 miles.

No one in business would deny that their use of the company car must be taxed and treated fairly, but British drivers are taxed more heavily than their counterparts on the Continent.

A study by Swan National showed just how much. Based on an average employee using a 1.6-litre car costing £12,000 new, covering 15,000 business miles and 5,000 private miles, a British worker pays an average of £2,650 annually. In Germany that figure falls to £2,055, in Italy and France to £1,250 and in Spain to just £950.

Yet those taxes do not go to paying for more roads nor do they benefit the company car driver at the expense of other

groups in society. Taxation from motorists in 1991 was £20.7 billion in 1991; spending on roads was £4.5 billion.

Does the company car cause congestion? It seems unlikely, given that only about 4.5 million drivers are thought to use company vehicles out of a vehicle population of almost 23 million.

The company car driver has been a soft target for too long, willing to pay up and take the blame for all manner of problems which afflict Britain's roads.

But the past three years has underlined just how important a healthy fleet industry is to the wealth-creating powers of the nation. In recession, the quickening absence of new company cars being ordered and the consequent near collapse of the motor industry has made the Chancellor's heart much fonder of the fleet business.

Whichever of the parties comes to power might do well to accentuate the positive. For example, company fleets are the main driving force behind the British motor economy. They buy more than half of all

new cars each year. Evidence from the authoritative Monks survey shows clearly that more companies have been replacing cars less often. About 13 per cent more firms this year said they would hold their cars for three years or beyond.

The net effect has been to put the brakes on fleet sales, prompting a large part of the sudden drop of one third in new car sales from 2.3 million in 1989 to fewer than 1.6 million in 1991.

Without fleet buyers British car manufacturing is pitched into the downward spiral of recession. Private buyers tend to favour foreign cars, particularly high value Japanese marques, whereas many fleets maintain Buy British policies which favour Ford, Vauxhall, Rover and Jaguar. Ninety per cent of Jaguars, for example, are sold into fleets.

And the "green" lobbyists who single out the company car as a key contributor to destroying the environment in a road-based economy should think twice before levelling their accusations.

Fleets are more likely to buy newer cars which are

because of their newer technology, cleaner than those used by private buyers. The cars are better maintained and more regularly serviced which means that their engines work more efficiently and more cleanly.

There is also much evidence to support claims from the fleet industry that when unleaded petrol was introduced, companies conscious of cost and with new cars available to use the "greener" fuel were first to the pumps.

They have also responded quickly to the take-up of catalytic converters. With Budget incentives to buy new diesel-engined vehicles, which emit 30 per cent fewer hydrocarbons, 90 per cent less carbon monoxide and 30 per cent less carbon dioxide than petrol equivalents, there is no doubt that fleets will be first among the purchasers.

These facts are among those being studied now by Treasury officials charged by Mr Lamont with carrying out the wide-ranging review of company car taxation.

● The Fleet Car Show opens today at Silverstone until March 27.

On your marques

Most British companies allow staff to have cars made in other EC nations

While the British worker ponders his choice of new company car from a vast multinational list, the French simply say *non* to any model not made at home.

Figures show that while the predilection for company cars is just as great in other European nations as it is in Britain, Britons lag far behind when it comes to supporting their own national industry (Kevin Eason writes).

In the true spirit of European unity, most British companies allow employees to choose cars made in any of the EC nations, while others are even starting to admit Japanese cars, particularly those made in Britain, on to their fleet lists.

But that spirit of the Common Market is not recognised by our competitors — particularly France. Nine out of ten sales representatives in France who set out to visit their clients each day will do so in a Citroën, Peugeot or Renault at the insistence of their companies.

In Britain, a sales representative is just as likely to be driving a Renault as a Rover, according to a survey by the Monks Partnership into company car use.

The survey discovered that only 10 per cent of sales representatives in Britain are restricted to a British-built model with most companies allowing all European marques.

At the senior management level, the rules on nationalism are relaxed almost to the point of non-existence in British boardrooms. Only 4 per cent of British companies have a policy of insisting that the boss drives a British car.

In France, the rules are relaxed slightly for senior managers, presumably to allow the chairman to choose the sort of high value car, such as Mercedes or Rolls-Royce, not manufactured by French motor makers.

However, 55 per cent of French companies still spec-

ify that directors should drive only French-built cars while 40 per cent of German firms also insist on their own national products being driven by senior managers. The figure for the Italians is 35 per cent.

The Monks' survey of company car practice in 12 countries shows that the rest of Europe has caught up with, and in some cases overtaken, the use of company cars in Britain.

Britain has slipped to sixth position in the league table of companies in European nations which give cars to the heads of their organisations as a salary perk.

Company heads in both Austria and Germany all get perk cars, while the figures are 98 per cent for Belgium and Spain, 97 per cent for France and Denmark but 96 per cent for Britain.

However, the Monks European Company Car Survey 1992 also shows that cars for executives below board level are most common in UK companies. For example, 93 per cent of senior finance managers in British companies get a car, but the figure falls sharply to just 62 per cent in Switzerland and 33 per cent in Sweden.

The high rate of provision of company cars has been blamed for severely distorting the British new car market. About half of all sales go into company fleets, often at heavy discounts of up to 50 per cent.

The Chancellor, Norman Lamont, hit company car users hard with tax increases last year, slowing sales and raising questions as to whether fleets would dwindle in size.

However, the evidence from Monks seems to indicate that the UK is not that far out of line with its European competitors.

● Monks Partnership European Company Car Survey 1992, price £150, from Monks Partnership, Debdon Green, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3LX.



Driven to new heights

John Kilby drove 95,000 miles in three years in his company car. Then he won the business driver of the year

JOHN KILBY polishes his company car. Friends ask me why I bother looking after it when it is not my car. But it is one of the tools of my trade, he says. "It is the piece of equipment that stands between me and death. People don't pay enough attention to their vehicles and their driving."

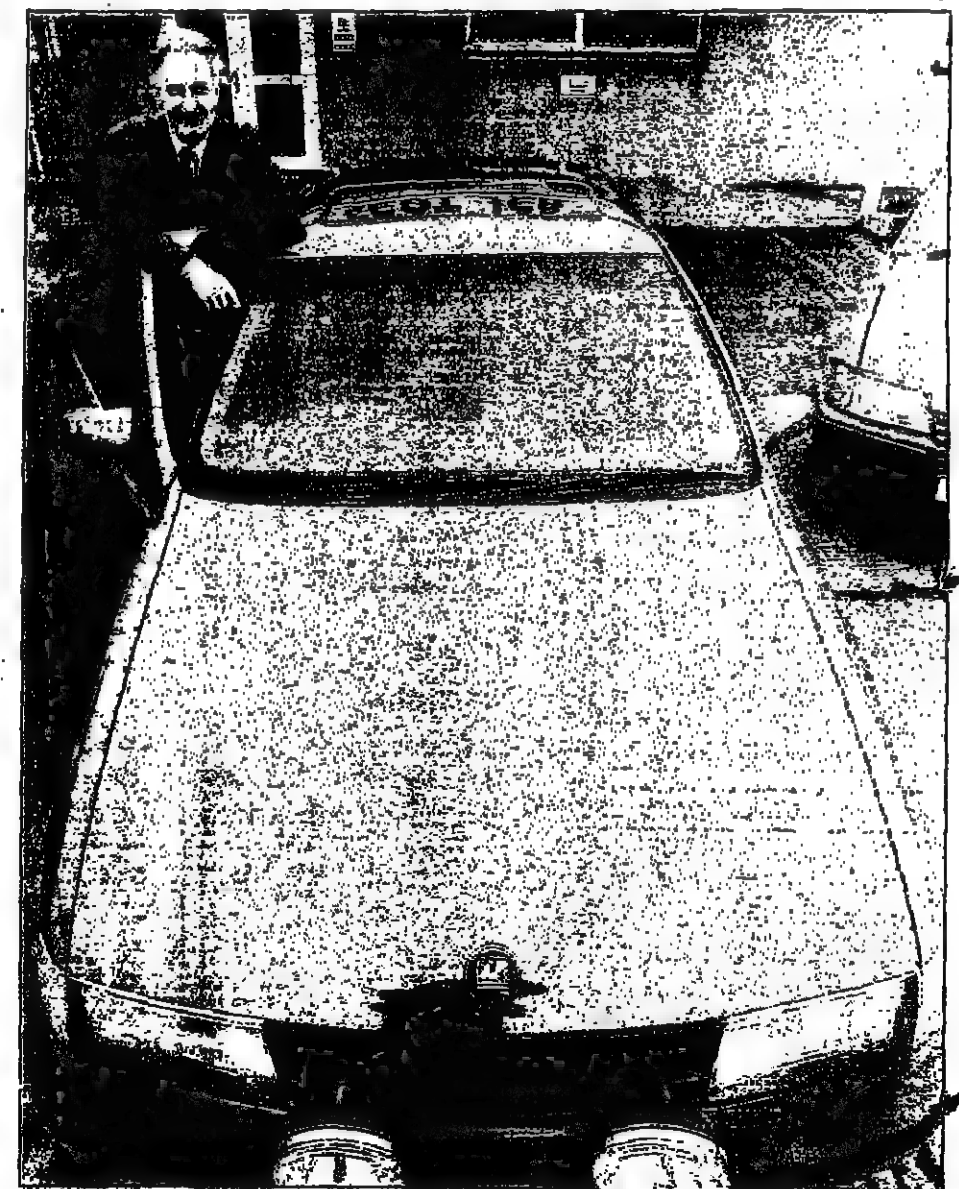
This is the attitude that won Mr Kilby the Cellnet business driver of the year title in one of the stiffest tests of driving devised (Rodney Hobson writes). More than 3,500 people driving at least 10,000 miles a year filled in a tough question paper based mainly on the Highway Code. The organisers were surprised how many motorists struggled with the answers. Gillian MacCarthy at Cellnet, the mobile telephone company running the event, says: "The drivers had to do their homework. Not many of us have looked at the Highway Code since we took our tests."

Cellnet selected 36 winners for a one-day driving test at each of five regional centres. The top four from each area went through to the finals at Donington race circuit.

Dr Jonathan Palmer, a former Formula One motor racing driver described by the organisers as "very devious", thought up a test that sounds like a chamber of horrors. A day-and-night road run, supervised by the Institute of Advanced Driving, was the easy part.

On the Donington track, one car had steering on all four wheels and brakes that switched themselves off electronically in the middle of a skid. Another car was driven at speed with a ball in a dish on the bonnet. An emergency stop was performed at 60mph on a wet road going downhill.

In another test, drivers suddenly came across a simulated accident in which one car was on fire and the driver of another vehicle had been



Advanced victory: John Kilby whose motoring won him business driver of the year

thrown out and had stopped breathing. Contestants not only had to do the right thing, but do them in correct order.

The eventual winner believed he had missed his chance of success when prizes were presented for best performance in the various categories. Mr Kilby won none. His victory was due to a solid all-round performance.

Mr Kilby is general manager at Scot JCB, which sells earth-moving equipment. Based at Carlisle, Cumbria, he drives a Vauxhall Cavalier and has run up 95,000 miles in the three years he has had it, almost all of it on business. Aged 46, he has been driving for 27 years. Surpris-

ingly, he did not pass his driving test first time and he blames his initial failure on the impenitence of youth. He also failed to win the Cellnet driver of the year award the first time he entered the event. He had previously been in the finals and felt so strongly about the importance of safe driving that he came back for more.

Despite the rigours of the test, Cellnet is thinking of widening the scope to include drivers doing lower mileages. Possible categories this year will include women and young drivers.

RODNEY HOBSON

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Go to the head of the class

Sierras and Cavaliers might be the obvious first choice for fleet managers — but there is plenty of competition, reports Eric Dymock

Price and engine capacity are likely to remain the basis for choosing company cars, despite the fresh approach in the Budget. The custom and practice of 1.5 litres and £7,000 for junior executives, and 2.0 litres and £10,000 for middle managers, is too deep-rooted to change much even with the new ceiling of £12,000 for capital allowances and relief for lease rental payments.

It is difficult to challenge the best buys in the volume sector, dominated by the Vauxhall Cavalier and Astra, Ford Escort, Sierra and Fiesta, Rover 200 and 400 and Metro, Vauxhall Nova, Peugeot 405, and Nissan Micra. The practicalities of using the main makes, with good dealer networks, make a strong case for fleet users. But drivers still count.

User choosers have helped create the cult of the Cavalier. It is regarded as more of a driver's car than the staid Sierra, which is due to be replaced next year by a front-wheel drive successor which may restore the balance. Snatched pictures of the Sierra replacement, which may well be called something else by the spring, suggest it will not be adventurously styled. But Ford has been so shaken by its loss of market share in recent years that CDW27, as it is still known, will take a big step forward in driver appeal.

Despite the Escort's indifferent reception by the press, which was critical of its ride and appearance, it has remained near the top of the sales league. Ford is good at second thoughts, and there are improvements in the pipeline which will keep the Escort among the front runners. The ride and handling have been improved, the new Zeta engine is sweet-running and quiet and, as with the Sierra, a programme of appearance improvements will keep it from looking dated. All that remains is to improve NVH (Noise Vibration and Harshness), to make it a match for some of the opposition, in particular the Japanese.

The Escort bodyshell is unworthy of the new Zeta engine. Ford's second-thoughts department needs to make it a quieter partnership before the Escort can be sure of



Eye catchers for the fleet buyer: the BMW 850i (top) and Rover's stylish 214Si 16-valve model

fighting off the splendid Vauxhall Astra.

A few years ago a Rover in the top ten would have been at best unexpected and at worst inexplicable. Yet in December last year, 4,490 Rover 200s were sold against 4,130 Escorts, 4,052 Sierras, and 3,928 Fiestas. The small Rover 200 and 400-series cars are quiet, refined, reliable, stylish, well-furnished and make a welcome change from the customary Ford or Vauxhall. Rover's self-imposed task — to provide for the important niche market — is providing cars of great proficiency.

The 2.0 litre and highly specified

Rover GSi and GTi models are pricey, so are the turbo-diesels, but with more UK dealers than Vauxhall (yet barely 60 per cent of Ford's) the small Rover is a best buy for customers with taste and discrimination.

In the small hatchback class, Peugeot's new supermini, the 106 1.1, represents better value than the Metro, whose price has followed the rest of the Rover range upwards. The Metro is well packaged, but its equipment and refinement have been left behind by the competition, which includes the bargain basement Ford Fiesta and the Renault Clio.

The new VW Golf commands the family saloon class, despite its bizarre advertising campaign, which seems to emphasise a somewhat negative virtue — recycling. It is all very well for VW to flaunt its zeal for the environment, but some buyers may not understand the significance of putting a new car straight into the crusher for the sake of an advertisement.

The Golf will not reach the top ten UK sellers because its quality still comes at a premium price but, although the new model is disappointingly noisy, its precision and liveliness make it as tempting as ever. The Fiat Tempra has made little

headway against it because of doubts over reliability; it deserves to do better.

Volvo takes pride of place in the estate car market against a crop of new executive load-carriers, such as the roomy Granada and Citroën XM. The Audi 100 and BMW Touring join Mercedes-Benz in an upper-crust part of the market where estate cars are long on prestige, short on space, but still manage to have the feel and speed of saloon cars.

Citroën wins in the sub-2.0 litre class with the BX estate, which has an astonishing amount of room for its size, and in the big class the XM keeps loads on an even keel with hydraulic springs which keep the handling consistent even when there is a heavy weight in the tail.

Executive cars not only present fleet managers with an ample choice, they may also provoke the deepest anguish. Dealing with middle management and reps is easy, compared with the dignity of a senior executive lusting for a BMW or a Jaguar. Pence per mile and residual values have no place in a debate about prestige and emotion. Perceptions displace certainty and fleet managers whose word may be law up to the eleventh floor, can find themselves overruled on the twelfth.

Buy racy-looking Alfa Romeos for thrusting senior managers and take depreciation on the chin? Or go for BMWs as a recruitment come-on? Trust Mercedes-Benz for an image of excellence knowing the investment is safe? Go for a galvanised Audi in the certainty that it will not rust for ten years? Play safe and have a Volvo?

Rover has returned to its roots with an old-style grille to show it is determined to get back to old values as a middle-class car for doctors, lawyers and conservative businessmen. It has succeeded with the 820 (it is tempting to call it a Rover 16) but the old V-6 engine in the larger 827 is less winsome.

The classy interior is a match for anything short of a Rolls-Royce provided you go for the Connolly leather and polished walnut versions. Likewise Saab, which gives real distinction and executive performance at slightly less than executive prices.

BMW is best for officers promoted in the field from Vauxhall Cavaliers, who appreciate superb engines and impeccable handling. Vauxhall Carlton and Senators are underrated and well-equipped; Granadas outsell other big cars in Britain and, while they may not be first choice with the twelfth-floor user chooser, 1,200 Ford dealers up and down the country make a very convincing case.

Calling all cars, at last

Tracking vehicles has become a reality with the spread of communications networks

Vehicle tracking is becoming an ever higher priority for car fleets, as the effects of traffic congestion, fuel consumption and security needs push costs up.

In 1990 the Confederation of British Industry estimated that traffic congestion cost British industry up to £15 billion a year in lost time, vehicle wear and tear, and fuel consumption. The recession and the rising costs of vehicles and employees have added to that figure, and it is not surprising, therefore, that those responsible for vehicle fleets are concerned to make sure they are being used as efficiently and economically as possible.

It became a commercial reality when Securix Datatrack, a subsidiary of the Securix Group, launched its Datatrack system in 1988 after a multi-million pound investment in radio communications networks.

For car rental and hire companies, with hundreds of pick-ups and set-downs every day, the need to know where the vehicles are is vital.

Securix Datatrack says its vehicle tracking and mobile communications system is the first to combine navigation technology with a data communications network and display technology.

The company argues that although the advent of cellular technology has improved communications, voice based systems are expensive to run and are driver dependent. The alternative is a system such as theirs that allows operators to monitor and control their vehicles and staff without the need for the intervention of the driver.

Datatrack uses a network of low-frequency navigation transmitters and UHF

receivers covering England and Scotland. A small antenna in the vehicle picks up navigation signals to provide the information of its whereabouts, displayed on a series of digital maps on a screen to give the controller the ability to see at a glance exactly where all the vehicles are.

The emergency services are perhaps the most important group to benefit from such systems. Several ambulance services use them, and Gloucestershire ambulance service is equipping its 29 accident and emergency vehicles with the Datatrack system.

The service covering 730,000 acres in a rural area, at present responds to 95 per cent of emergency calls within 20 minutes.

Location of cars can be seen at a glance

New proposed guidelines call for that to be reduced to 19 minutes.

Datatrack's automatic vehicle location (AVL) technology is at the heart of the RAC's prototype emergency transmitter, designed to bring swifter help to the stranded motorist.

A Mori survey last year showed that 55 per cent of women are frightened of breaking down on a motorway and 42 per cent dislike driving at night. Last year, of the 2.4 million breakdowns that the RAC attended, nearly 40 per cent were from women drivers, and the scheme produces what is claimed to be the first car-carried emergency transmitter.

Nigel Davies, technical support manager of the RAC, said their own research had identified vulnerable drivers.

"Women, mothers with children, the elderly and the disabled have a very real fear of breaking down in the middle of nowhere."

CHRISTOPHER WARMAN

Deal a card from the top

A plastic card can mean that fuel costs are lower than pump prices — and now it can be used to pay for everything from tyres to batteries

Fuel buying for fleet cars involves the massive use of plastic cards, with volume discounts of 15 per cent off pump prices commonly on offer. Cards have brought simplicity with efficiency as well as reinforcement of bulk buying discounts and have added benefits like squeezing out employee fraud.

Increasingly electronic systems are enhancing the advantages and adding benefits of their own, notably the elimination of paper-based accounting. Of all card transactions for fuel 60 per cent are now via electronic points of sale, up from the 50 per cent mark reached just over two years ago.

The ubiquitous cards, processing transactions worth about £1.5 billion a year, can also be used increasingly to buy all the other necessities of motoring life,

from tyres and batteries to paying for repairs and setting servicing bills.

In the cards-based market two companies are key competitors. The market leader is PHH Allstar, whose ultimate parent is the PHH Corporation based in the United States. PHH, with an extensive background in fleet management, has particularly developed the use of cards as a payments system for any costs met in running a fleet.

Its closest competitor is Overdrive Fleet Information Services (OFIS), a joint venture involving Evans Halshaw, best known as a car sales and garage chain, of about 40 outlets with a wide range of dealerships ranging from Rolls Royce, Jaguar,

BMW and Mercedes to volume producers like Vauxhall and Peugeot. Evans Halshaw is partnered by Overdrive Credit Card, part of Harper Holdings.

A year ago Harper acquired from Dial Contracts, the vehicle contract hire group, its Dialcard operation, then the third force in the fleet card business. Dialcard is continuing to be run as a separately branded operation. Overdrive has plans for enhancing its operations to increase its competitiveness.

Oil companies also offer plastic card payment systems to fleet car users with no charge being made for the card. BP, Esso and Shell have especially pushed to seize a

share of the market, a clear advantage being the loyalty they can promote for an oil company's particular brand of fuel.

Users of such cards are not necessarily restricted to picking up fuel from the oil company's own outlets. BP's Supercharge card, for instance, is run operationally by PHH Allstar so that the BP card can be used very flexibly at any petrol outlets which accept the Allstar card. That amounts to well over half of the 20,000 forecourts.

Truck fleets use agency cards to pick up their diesel although big operators often organise their own bunkering systems. Specialised cards for the car fleets account for 47 per

cent of all fuel used by fleets, estimates David Knight, the managing director of PHH Allstar. The company claims nearly a third of the card-based sector.

On behalf of its customers the company spends upwards of £13 million a week on motor fuel, which is about 6 per cent of all fuel used in the UK. All this goes through the company card. About £3 million in diesel sales a week is included in the card transactions.

A recent PHH initiative is the setting up, with Keyfuels as supplier, a nationwide network of diesel outlets. It has been branded Diesel Direct and effectively offers bunkering facilities but at a far wider variety — some 400

outlets — than anything a company itself could set up. The additional advantage compared with a company's own bunkering where stocks have to be paid for is that with the new system only fuel drawn off by a customer is billed.

Mr Knight said: "A customer may be picking up diesel on the road through Diesel Direct and petrol with Allstar. We can consolidate all this into a total fuel management package." A charge card is used for payments when customers use the PHH options.

Mr Knight underlines the importance of electronics systems to the card operations. It helps bring more trade to companies like PHH which has also benefited because in the recession companies have looked to fleet management.

DEREK HARRIS

When a decision has to be made on fleet financing it can cost a firm a fortune — or save one

Now, make your choice

Company cars are huge business — they account for half the new cars bought in Britain each year. But they offer as many headaches as opportunities. Make the wrong decision about finance and you could be left with massive capital losses as residual values on your worn-out company car fleet dribble away.

Just as easily, the wrong lease finance or management contract could hit you with crippling monthly bills while providing neither the right tax breaks nor the right flexibility of fleet.

Increasingly firms are turning to fleet finance. Just ten years ago 80 per cent of company cars were bought outright by the user. Today only half are outright purchases, the rest are used under some form of lease or contract hire.

With about 1,000 organisations offering leasing and/or management facilities, how does one choose from the alternatives?

Ian Tibbrook is the vehicle leasing director at Lease Plan, which provides finance and services and has 15,000 vehicles on its books. Mr Tibbrook says: "The average company car is worth

£15,000. A fleet of 100 cars can tie up £1.5 million of capital which could be better used in a firm's core business.

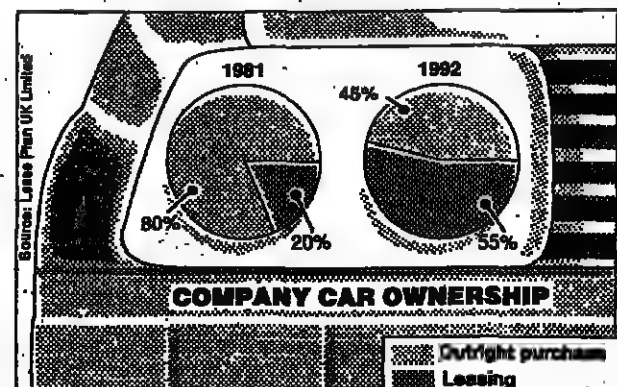
"Lease arrangements mean the user can know three years ahead of time exactly how much their fleet is going to cost and budget accordingly." What are the options?

Outright purchase
The most straightforward but riskiest way of setting up a fleet. Simply buy the cars yourself.

In today's distressed motor market there are excellent deals to be had either new or nearly new, with dealers anxious to offer reductions — especially to somebody buying in bulk.

Auction houses are also increasingly popular with company fleet managers looking to buy nearly new vehicles at prices thousands of pounds cheaper than the same model new.

While outright purchase has the advantage of capital allowance write-off this must be set against tying up capital in stock that probably has nothing to do with your core business.



Also, cars depreciate at an alarming rate and what was once a sparkling fleet can, after three years, look a shabby asset worth a quarter of the purchase price.

John Brown, the chairman of the Finance and Leasing Association, whose members in 1990 financed more than £13 billion worth of vehicles says: "Residual values as a percentage of original cost have slumped recently exposing the user company to significant depreciation risks and resulted in many businesses reviewing their fleet disposal policy."

"In this situation a facility such as contract hire which freed the user from residual value risk has significant advantages."

Hire purchase
With HP, the car user hires the vehicles but does not become the owner until payment of a nominal sum at the end of the agreed hire period.

However, the user is treated as the owner from the beginning of the contract, allowing him to claim capital allowance, which was recently raised to £12,000 in the Budget on each vehicle.

With HP the assets are

shown in the balance sheet. No VAT is payable on rentals and finance charge levies are allowable as a business expense.

Finance lease
A form of rental under which the final rental value is set to match the anticipated resale price (residual value) of the fleet. There is no capital allowance advantage for the vehicle user and rentals attract VAT. However, such agreements usually improve cash flow since deposits are low and rental fees usually lower too.

Contract hire
Particularly popular with small to medium sized companies and growing 5 per cent each year. Finance is provided on a lease basis and, for a fixed monthly rental, the company car user is covered for all running costs, including service and maintenance.

The user simply pays for fuel and insurance and risks himself of all administration. The Finance and Leasing Association says: "This is the least risky form of fleet finance as the risk falls on the contract hire company."

Fleet management
For businesses which want to get on with their own business and let the car experts take care of theirs. The car user can either sort out the financing and hand administration over to a fleet management firm or seek the whole package.

Wise management of a fleet by a specialist organisation can save big money. Also, the economies of cost in vehicle purchase and maintenance are difficult to match.

Contract purchase
This bridges the gap between finance and administration, combining the tax advantages of outright purchase with the budgeting benefits of contract hire. John Brown says: "Finance is available under contract purchase which does not lock up large capital sums in depreciating assets and efficient fleet management services are on offer."

VAUGHAN FREEMAN
● **Contacts:** Finance and Leasing Association, 18 Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1X 9PB. British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association, 13 St John's Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1JU.

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Hertz

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Fleet News

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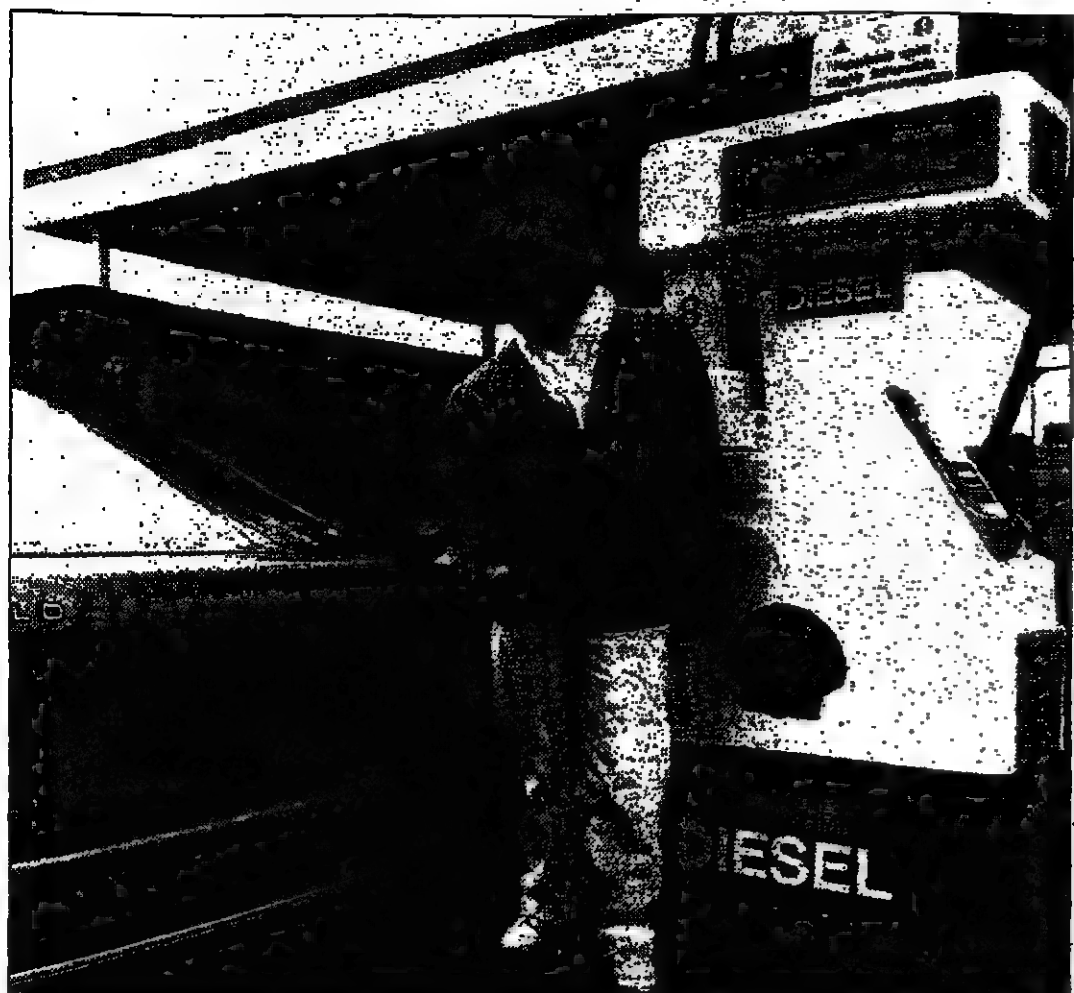
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Drive

When

Diesel is joining the fast lane



Fuel stops: customers in the United Kingdom bought a record 139,810 diesel cars last year

Once it could be argued, with some conviction, that anybody who drove a petrol car as slowly as a diesel would show much the same savings. A 20 per cent reduction in speed would provide a 20 per cent improvement in economy.

Times have changed. Modern diesels provide a 25 to 30 per cent improvement in economy, especially where petrol cars are at their worst, in stop-start town driving. On short journeys, where speed hardly matters, diesels can show such substantial savings that sales have grown steadily throughout the 1980s.

In 1991, UK customers bought a record 139,810 diesel cars, an increase of 9.1 per cent, while sales of petrol-engined cars fell by 22.8 per cent. In the first two months of 1992, diesels took 11.22 per cent of the market, more than one new car in ten, and despite resistance from company car drivers to cars they regard (unfairly) as noisy and smelly, the signs are that the UK will follow some markets in Europe where diesels now account for one car in three.

Twenty per cent of European in-range cars are now diesels. With encouragement from large differentials in fuel tax in Italy and Belgium it is 40 per cent. France 37 per cent, Portugal and Holland 25 per cent. In Britain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, and Norway, where price differentials are smaller, large-car buyers have been slower to switch to diesels.

Greece has now set the price of

Once it had a reputation as a slow, dirty engine. But now, Eric Dymock reports, the diesel is rapidly gaining popularity

diesel at half that of petrol and in most countries diesel duty is 70 per cent of leaded petrol. Community harmonisation is likely to bring the UK level down from its current 90 per cent.

The Budget stimulated diesel by removing the cubic capacity rule fixing the tax bracket for company cars. Diesel users suffered a higher tax assessment because diesel engines are larger than petrol cars of similar power.

The 75 horsepower Volkswagen Golf diesel, for example, is 1.9 litres against the 75 horsepower petrol car's 1.8 litres. Vauxhall's new 1.7 litre turbo-diesel Cavalier gives 82 horsepower, and much the same performance as the 1.6 litre catalytic-equipped petrol car — a top speed of 109mph, and a 0 to 60mph time of 13.5 seconds.

The most prolific diesel car in Britain is the Citroen BX, with more than 80,000 sales, the most luxurious and probably smoothest the Citroen XM turbo-diesel automatic. What Car nominated the Citroen ZX Advantage D the best diesel car of 1992 against the BX, the Peugeot 309 GRDT, Peugeot 205D Turbo, Fiat Tipo 1.9 Tds, Renault 19GTD, Fiat Tempra 1.9 Tds, Peugeot 405 GLD, Audi 80 Turbo D, Rover 218 and Vauxhall Astra.

Statistical evidence in favour of diesel fleets is convincing. One large operator reports saving around £1 million a year in financing, depreciation, and fuel costs in a fleet of 1,000 vehicles. Another, with 1,100 vehicles, claims a saving of £330,000 in fuel costs alone.

Hertz Leasing calculates that changing a fleet of Peugeot 405 1.6 GL petrol cars to 1.9 GLD diesels would save a ten-car fleet £21,862 in one year, a 50 car fleet £109,312, and a 250-car fleet £546,560.

PHH Allstar's fleet database claims that a typical firm can save £40,000 to £60,000 a year in fuel and maintenance by switching 100 vehicles to diesel and there are more savings to be had from buying diesel in bulk. An operator can save £1,500 on 30,000 litres per month through buying direct from an oil company and drawing fuel as required from a bunker network.

Yet there are compelling reasons for choosing a diesel, besides economy.

Forty-nine per cent of the 4.8 million breakdowns to which the AA was called out in 1991 were due to electrical faults. Seventeen per cent of these arose from poor battery maintenance; the

rest came from faulty ignition systems, dampness, shorting, spark plugs, points, and distributors, all equipment on which diesels do not rely.

The ADAC, the German equivalent of the AA, says that petrol cars suffer 50 per cent more breakdowns than diesels.

Diesel engines are environmentally clean. They produce only about one-tenth of a petrol car's carbon monoxide and even against a petrol engine with a catalytic converter, a diesel produces 20 per cent less carbon dioxide, the primary "greenhouse effect" gas.

Diesels do produce more oxides of nitrogen (the acid-rain culprit) but less hydrocarbons than a catalytic-equipped petrol car. The latest diesels, such as the Volkswagen Umwelt (Environmental) engine, have a catalytic converter to deal with these.

Diesel fuel has no lead additives and although they have a smoky reputation, the amount of soot a well-ordered car diesel produces is small.

Diesel engines last longer and command a premium on the second-hand market, enhancing residual values.

The slow-revving characteristics of diesel engines tends to make driving more measured, although many modern turbocharged diesels are very little slower than their petrol-engined counterparts. The heavy flywheel of the diesel means slower gearchanges and generally less urgency which many drivers claim improves safety.

Drive away from worries

Do you really know how many vehicles you have? If not, then it is time to call in the fleet doctor

How often have you found yourself staring at your own car windscreen, realising you have forgotten to renew the road tax?

Little wonder then that companies with a core business far removed from transport are increasingly handing over their vehicle problems to specialised fleet management firms.

David Knight, the managing director of PHH Allstar, Britain's biggest company vehicle fleet management specialist, says firms come to him for help often not knowing how many vehicles they run.

The first problem is to establish just how many vehicles a firm has," he says. "They tell us they have, say, 2,000 vehicles. In fact there may be a difference of 50 or 100 vehicles. It is often difficult to establish where those vehicles are."

Such loose management with articles of stock each worth thousands of pounds is not only costly, but also consumes expensive personnel if run in-house. Staff could be more profitably used on the core side of the organisation.

Figures from the rental experts EuroDollar show small firms in particular may be using their fleet cars so uneconomically it may be cheaper for them to hire vehicles when they are needed

on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis.

EuroDollar's managing director, John Leigh, says: "Car rental is a cost-effective, flexible, and trouble-free alternative to using pool vehicles. For the small business, it provides a useful way of reducing costs or actually enhancing overall efficiency."

Regular renters can now have their own on-site EuroDollar office, or use a system called Speedlink, allowing them to plug straight into EuroDollar computers to make or extend reservations.

Medium and larger firms are more likely to be committed to their own pool fleets, giving up their own staff to administer them. Mr Knight recalls one firm which had 50 staff buying, organising, and servicing all within the same fleet. By bringing in PHH, the 50 staff were re-allocated, and PHH need just ten people to do the same job.

He said: "Even small fleets need five or six people to run them in-house. We do the same job with one or two people, so there are clear advantages in the personnel area even before you come to the benefits of purchasing power in vehicles, parts, and servicing which operations like ours can offer."

Len Tilmock, the vehicle leasing director of Lease Plan, says that as well as seeking



Counting: David Knight helps firms keep track of fleets

financial benefits, firms who farm out their fleet management have one other overriding concern.

"I think the single biggest influence must be convenience," he says. "The buying, selling, and running of company cars is a hazardous business. In the recession, companies want to be involved in their core business, not spending time and money worrying about their car fleets."

"We can provide a range of services from initial purchase or lease through to everything from replacement exhaust systems to batteries and tyres." Some firms may still choose to buy and retain their own vehicles, and then farm out the management of them.

Whether managing a fleet owned by somebody else, or which they are financing, the first thing a fleet management firm must do is establish the nature and needs of the client's company.

Such clients are often surprised when detailed analysis of the costs and make-up of their fleet show they have been running a collection of vehicles little suited to their needs or budget.

Independent management firms tied to no particular manufacturer can advise on car models and engine sizes, for instance, urging diesel where only petrol had been considered, but might better suit a firm's needs. Even something like a fleet manage-

ment fuel card can unexpectedly bring benefits. Analysis of fuel card purchases can show firms where their representatives are inefficiently overlapping, and so provide another way of streamlining operations.

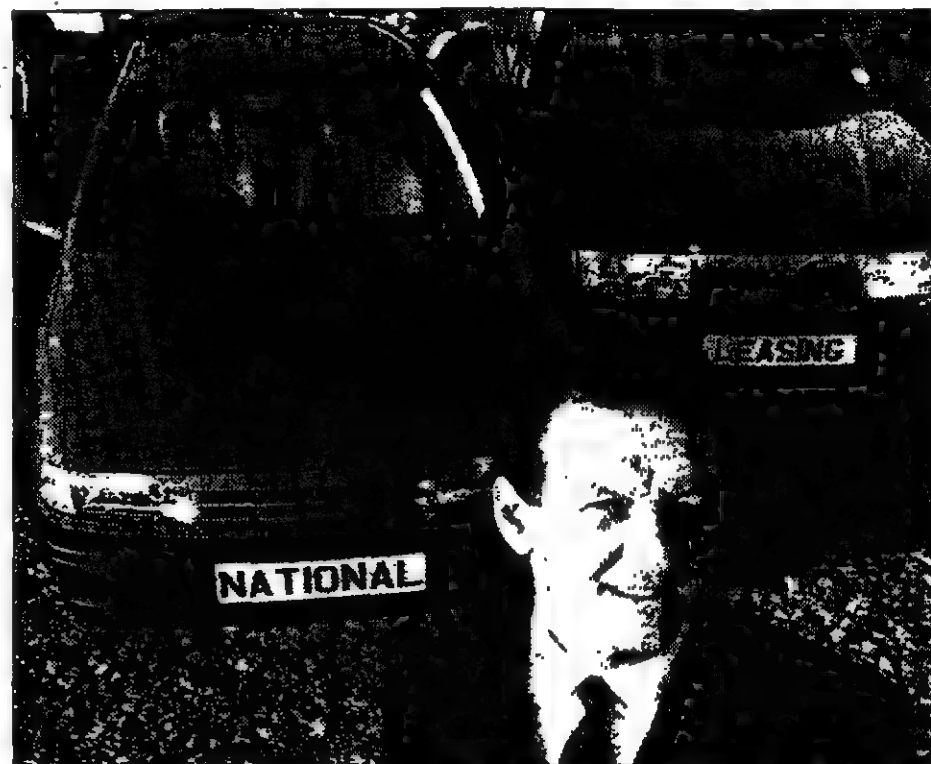
At PHH, each client gets a written report every six months. Mr Knight says: "We give clients a comprehensive report on how their vehicles are being used, who has incurred the most capital costs in a given period, and which of their vehicles has been the most problematic. In this way, it is possible to grow a picture to see if a particular vehicle is suitable for a client."

Other savings are also available from fleet management organisations, whose prime concern is not to sell cars, but to retain custom in an increasingly competitive sector by providing superior service. For example, the Budget changes affecting company car operations were much debated in the lead-up to March 10.

Mr Robert Whalley, at PHH, says: "We were pretty sure there would be some changes in car tax, which in the event was reduced from 10 per cent to five per cent. Thinking there might be changes we advised our clients to delay purchasing new vehicles for their fleets until after the Budget. We estimate that advice has saved our clients some £250,000."

If money talks, then the message seems clear to anyone wrestling with the headache of company car management.

VAUGHAN FREEMAN



Rescue package: Len Clayton, of Swan National Leasing, offers a replacement vehicle

The men who will ride to the rescue

The most important requirement for any corporate fleet is that the vehicles are reliable, but breakdowns can still occur with devastating effect.

Contract hire companies are moving towards providing breakdown services as a back-up to full maintenance programmes. They point out that a package tailored to the requirements of a company car fleet simplifies budgeting, since the fleet operator knows all the costs in advance.

Swan National Leasing, for example, now offers a package that includes servicing, maintenance, repairs and a breakdown and accident service. Len Clayton, the managing director, says: "This ensures that the vehicles are less likely to break down and that if they do there is minimum business disruption. The contingency plans for emergencies such as road accidents include a providing a replacement vehicle."

Swan uses Auto-Mek, the mobile car servicing company, to carry out maintenance and repairs. Mr Clayton says: "We can provide greater savings in cost and time. Auto-Mek's mobile garage visits the customers wherever they are. This avoids time being wasted while the client delivers, waits for and collects vehicles that need servicing. On average, clients save four hours of downtime a week."

RODNEY HOBSON

You don't need to make a crisis out of a breakdown on the road

"One company avoids any downtime by having its cars serviced while they are not needed — during its monthly area meeting."

National Breakdown, which is based in Leeds, also offers a breakdown and recovery scheme that can be tailored to meet the needs of a client. It has introduced free European cover for fleet customers in anticipation of changes which will arise from the single European market. National Breakdown last year opened its European headquarters in Strasbourg.

The comprehensive package includes roadside repairs, nationwide recovery of vehicles and cover for caravans and trailers. Clients can opt for a lower-cost package that provides towing a broken down vehicle to the nearest garage. In a serious emergency messages are passed to the employer and to the waiting customer.

National Breakdown uses a network of 1,500 independent garages who give priority to

fleet customers. In Europe there is a network of more than 6,000 agents.

Fleet managers who do not want a full breakdown service can cover themselves for tyres, batteries and exhausts. ATS, based in Redditch, Worcestershire, provides a specialised service for fleets.

It has more than 500,000 tyres in stock and the correct type for a vehicle can be located through a computer system linking 530 centres.

Large stocks of leading makes of exhausts, batteries and shock absorbers are also held. Fleet users can insist on quality: National Breakdown and ATS have been awarded the British Standards BS 5750 certification. The test is stringent and covers administration, parts and work.

Auto-Mek does not employ apprentices, only fully skilled engineers. To ensure a thorough knowledge of each vehicle's history, the cars are assigned to each engineer whenever possible. In addition to listing the items checked and the condition of tyres, the engineer also declares any additional work done and any work that may be needed. Maintenance is carried out to the manufacturer's specifications, using the maker's parts to ensure that the vehicle's warranty is not invalidated.

R.H.

When lives are in your hands

A car is a lethal weapon — yet often drivers have no special training other than the standard driving test

A new, highly sophisticated driving simulator will be on display for the first time at the Fleet Show 1992. Made by Atari, it will allow visitors to the General Accident stand to assess their driving performance in many types of traffic situations.

David Crichton, the managing director of the commercial motor department at GA, explains why the insurance company is so keen to impress on visitors the need to take better care of their company cars: "This is European Safety Year and no doubt much will be said and done about improving safety in the workplace. Yet for the average company driver the workplace for at least two hours a day is the car."

"Unsupervised and without any special training, he or she has to control a valuable and potentially lethal piece of machinery in one of the most hazardous environments of all, Britain's crowded roads."

There are more than three million company car drivers in this country. They clock up about 63 billion miles between them and run up more than one million insurance claims a year.

Mr Crichton says: "The company car is a major contributor to the carnage on our roads. The biggest cause of death in this country for people aged between four and 44 is road accidents."

Colin Tourick, the director of business development at FMM Motor Management, a fleet management company based at St Neots, Cambridge,

shire, says: "Companies who run large fleets of vehicles will appreciate the time wasted and costs involved in accidents, repairs and insurance claims."

"A reduction in the number of accidents leads to reduced premiums, repair costs, uninsured losses, policy excess payments and replacement vehicle costs. For delivery vehicles this means fewer lost deliveries, damaged stock and unhappy customers while there are fewer drivers off the road or injured."

"Employees benefit from safer and less stressful driving both at work and in their private motoring. As a bonus, the roads are safer for everyone else."

Mr Tourick adds: "Drivers fail to appreciate all the potential hazards on today's busy roads, with 75 per cent of all accidents taking place in 30 mph zones and 95 per cent involving human error. All the evidence points to drivers needing assessment and training if accidents are to be reduced, particularly high risk company car drivers."

The driving test is still basically the same as the one introduced in the 1930s, long before cars were capable of travelling at 140 mph, yet recent surveys show that fewer than 5 per cent of fleet managers have any system of testing company car users

independently before handing over the keys. Nearly a third of fleet managers do not even ask to see their employee's driving licence.

Mr Crichton says: "Most company car drivers have a choice of car within a budget limit. This makes hot hatchbacks attractive with their high performance for the same price. Unlike the poor private motorists, company drivers have no need to worry about the cost of insurance."

Along with other insurers, General Accident has been campaigning for several years for companies to improve the standard of fleet driving — or face hefty premium increases to cover the considerable losses that insurers were likely to face.

Mr Crichton says: "That prediction has now come true with a vengeance as the recent round of insurance company results has shown. What is of even more concern is the growing number of drivers who cannot afford to insure at all. Last year there were more than 200,000 convictions for driving without insurance and no doubt that is only the tip of the iceberg."

General Accident is calling on fleet managers to pay more attention to the three E's: engineering, enforcement and education.

With more than half the

new cars sold in the country being bought by companies, fleet managers could influence vehicle design. They were an influential force in the move towards unleaded petrol.

Companies can deal with drivers who cause accidents by downgrading the car or insisting that the culprit passes an advanced driving test. Many companies simply fine an employee every time he has an avoidable accident.

There is scope for providing education in road safety through driver training courses, information bulletins, videos and safety campaigns. General Accident feels so

strongly on the issue that it has set up a register of top quality training.

Because of the high standards demanded, it has accepted only 15 training companies in the four years that the register has been open. As an incentive to fleet managers, a rebate of £40 is allowed for each driver who attends a course.

FMM has set up a defensive driving scheme with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. It says fleet drivers achieve a 40 per cent drop in insurance.

Mr Crichton adds a note of caution: "It is essential that the company is fully committed to safety on the road as well as in the workplace."

RODNEY HOBSON

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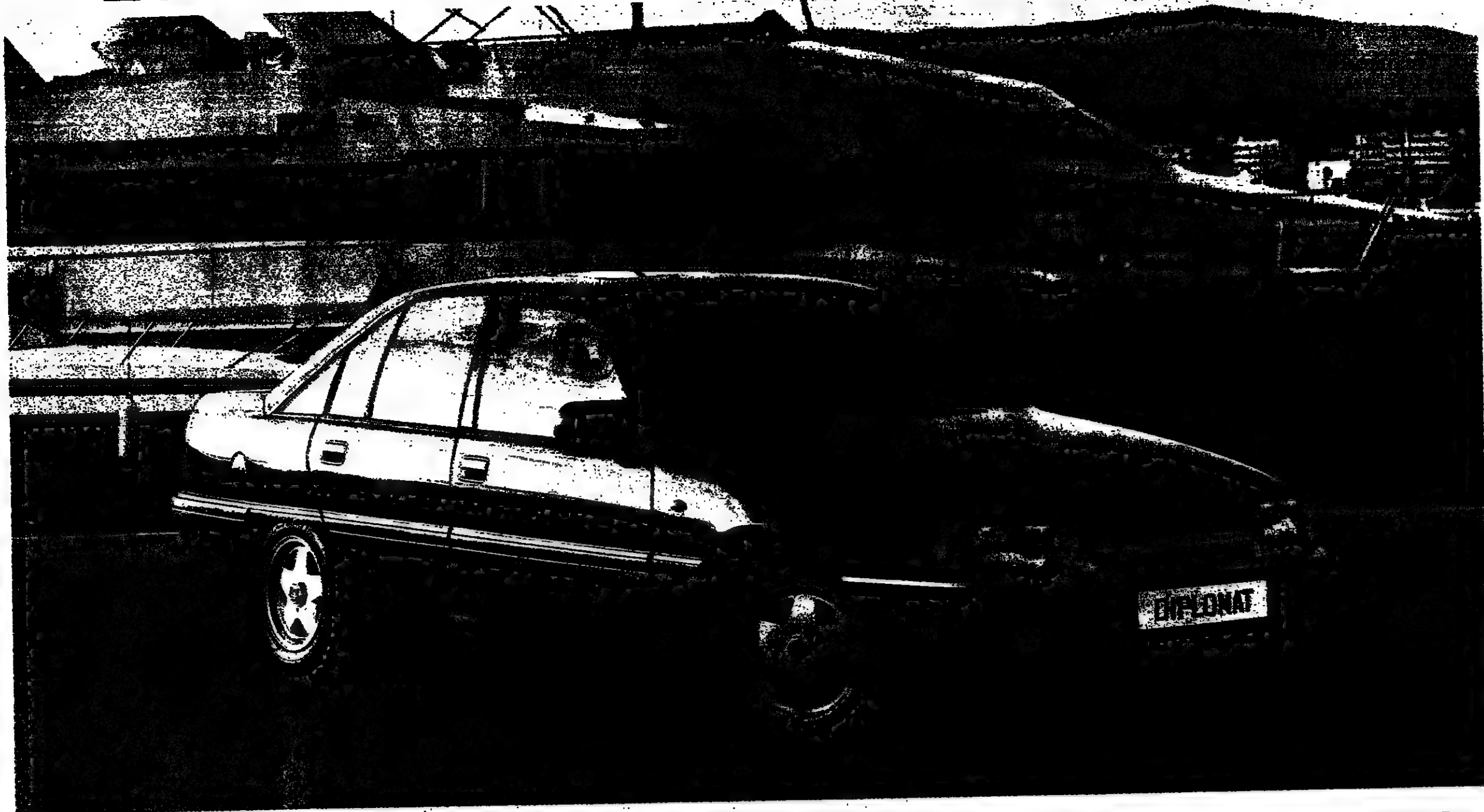
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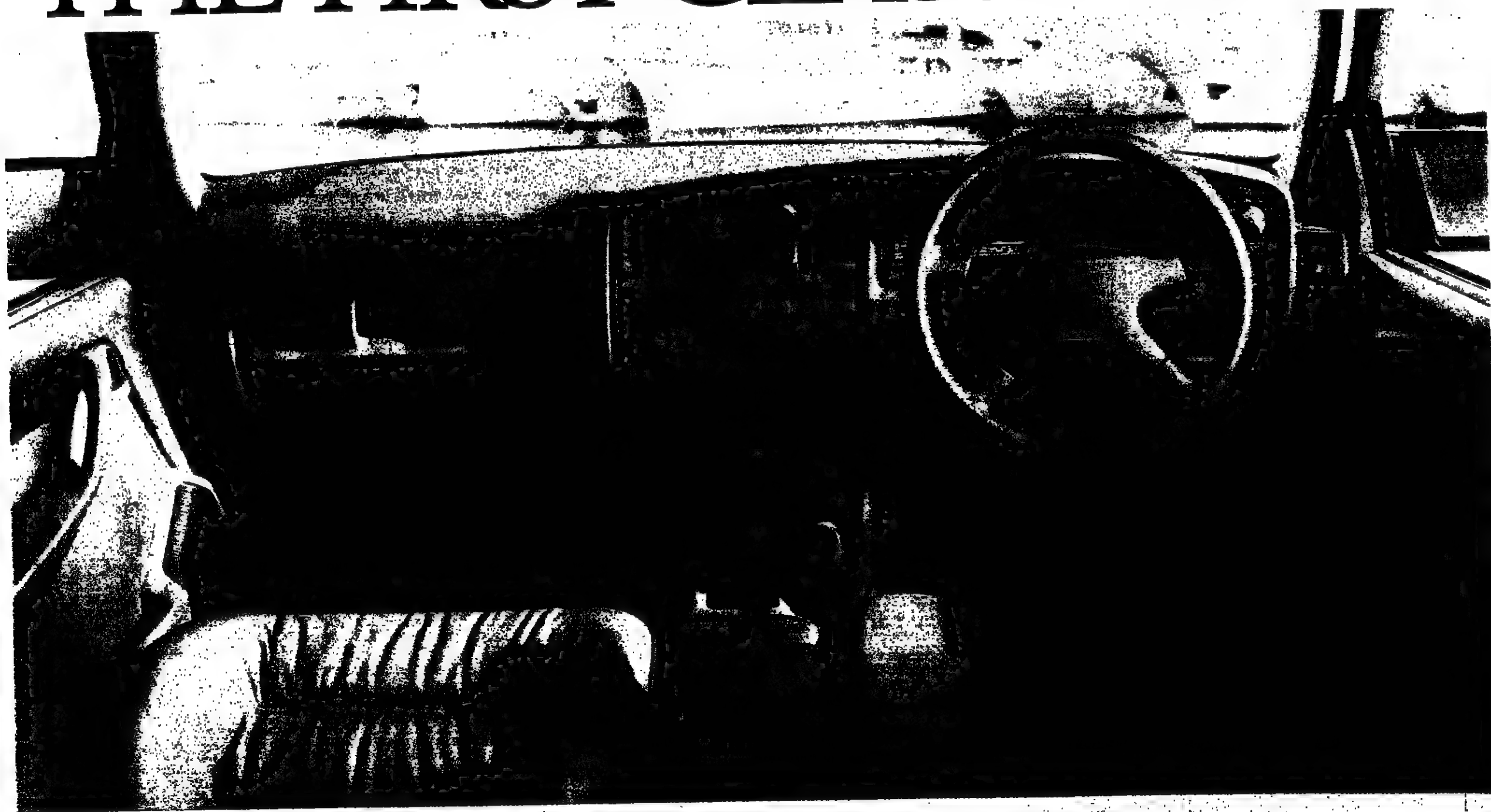
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A manager will soon be able to pinpoint his fleet at any time — and the technology will benefit the average driver, too, says Ken Young

Calling all phone buyers

For fleet managers the choice of services for in-car communications has never been greater — thanks to recent telecommunications liberalisation and technological development.

However, with increased choice comes greater complexity as buyers spend time deliberating over the relative merits of cellular telephony, public and private mobile radio, mobile data, and new pan-European services.

For two-way, simultaneous voice, communications Vodafone and Cellnet's cellular services are the clear favourites. Despite a recent slowdown in the market, cellular telephony has been a runaway success with more than 1.2 million subscribers connected since it was launched in January 1985.

Cellular phones range in price from £100 to £800, with the most recently launched lightweight portable phones (weighing about 400g) being at a premium. In-car installation of carphones costs a further £100 to £400.

Now that drivers are strongly advised not to use a carphone while on the move, all carphone installations include a hands-free unit which allows the driver to talk without holding the handset, thanks to a small microphone placed inside the vehicle. Top of the range carphones also include voice activated dialling, allowing totally hands-free use.

Portable cellphones are being increasingly favoured by car drivers thanks to the development of "car kits" which allow the user to mount the phone for in-car use as and when required. It also has the indirect benefit of reducing theft because the driver will invariably carry the telephone away from leaving the vehicle. Car kits add £200 to £700 to the cost of the telephone.

Except in specific areas, Cellnet and Vodafone have identical coverage of about 95 per cent of the United Kingdom by population. Fleet managers who negoti-

ate with service providers (who sell airtime on the networks) are more concerned about getting the best deal on a whole list of factors ranging from connection fees, itemised billing, installation, subscription rates, and termination agreements.

Because service providers are free to set their own fees above and beyond those recommended by the operators, the cost of using cellular services can vary widely. The average carphone user spends £1,100 a year.

To make cellular more flex-

Despite a slowdown, cellular telephony has been a success

ible, both operators have now added messaging services to the networks. These act like centralised, answerphones, taking calls when the user is unavailable and allowing messages to be picked up via the telephone when it is convenient. Average usage of messaging adds about 10 to 20 per cent to the yearly bill.

For "walkie-talkie"-type voice communications, where only the caller or receiver can talk at any one time, public or private mobile radio systems are preferred. The main benefit of such systems is that the operating costs of mobile radio are about one third that of cellular, and costs are more predictable because a fixed monthly fee is paid regardless of usage. Nationwide coverage on a public service is in the region of £29 a car a month, and radios cost from £400.

When a private network is built costs can be reduced even further but an operating licence is required, which in some areas can prove hard to obtain. Mobile radio is used on a "closed user group" basis

and therefore access to the public telephone network is not given.

For data-only services, there is an increasing range of options. Greg Moore, from the London-based CMA Consultants, says that there is a growing interest in mobile data services where voice links are unnecessary. "Managers need to decide if they can meet their needs by data links only; if so, the savings are worth looking at thanks to the new services now up and running," he says.

National mobile data networks were launched last year by RAM Mobile Data, Harrison Mobile Data, and Compaq. A fourth service, from Motorola, is also in development.

Typical users are field service teams and sales people exchanging details of customers and products via an in-car terminal. Mobile data services cost about £50 a month a year depending on the amount of usage and coverage required. Between them the operators have about 1,400 subscribers and each offer at least 65 per cent UK population coverage.

About 4,000 cellular users transmit fax and computer data over the cellular networks. One such corporate user is ICL, which has 450 service engineers transmitting job information via their carphones. Conversion of a carphone for data use costs about £1,500.

The next two years will see the launch of four mobile services. On the cellular front, a fully digital pan-European service — known as GSM — is being launched in phases. Its main benefit is that users can use their phones across national boundaries and because it is digital data services will be more reliable allowing use of in-car fax and portable computers. Vodafone has already launched a London service and Cellnet is set to follow in 1994.

Some overseas services will be available during the coming months, but availability of GSM phones is at present limited. A further disadvan-



On call: in the next two years a fully digital pan-European service will be launched

tage is that GSM carphones cost up to ten times more than some existing cellular phones. A GSM service covering the whole of the UK is unlikely until early 1995.

Early next year three operators will launch personal communications networks, known as PCNs. These are

best described as digital micro-cellular systems which are likely to compete directly with the cellular operators for fleet business. The PCN operators say their networks will allow the use of smaller phones and have cheaper service charges than cellular, but network coverage is expected to be

limited to the south-east and major cities during the first year of operation.

With so many competing services in the market fleet managers will be highly sought after for some years to come and should be able to arrange very favourable terms for testing new services.

Steer the right road

Not knowing what happens to the company's cars when they are out on the road is one of the fleet manager's big headaches.

Electronic systems are changing the position, with engine management systems storing information on engine history, but the next generation of electronic control systems will be able to provide information not only on how a car has been driven, but where it was taken.

Future systems will make it possible to track cars much more cheaply. Some are based on navigation satellites, some on terrestrial navigation systems, such as the Decca Navigator, and others on signals produced by the cellular phone base stations. Others work out a car's position by keeping track of the wheel speed and where they are pointing.

For the driver, the location system will be a friendly navigator in the dashboard, voicing instructions. In good time, such as "take the next turning on the left". Systems under development by companies such as GEC, have an accuracy of a few metres over several hundred miles.

Research at the Transport and Road Research Laboratory shows that if only 10 per cent of vehicles have navigation systems, there would be a substantial improvement for every road user.

BMW and Renault are expected to introduce top-range cars with navigation systems in 1994, based on Philips's Carin system. The system uses a compact disc to store a digital map which the car's computer compares with the data coming from the wheels and the steering.

Future systems may depend more on GPS, the satellite navigation system developed for military and civilian use by the Americans. Publicity during the Gulf war stimulated interest, and calculator-sized receivers that track the position to within a few metres are on the market at a few hundred pounds.

According to Chris Queré, a consultant with MVA Systematics in Woking, Surrey, one third of a million cars in Japan are equipped with automatic navigation. Systems under development in Europe, under European collaborative programmes such as Prometheus and Drive, will be different Mr Queré says, partly to take advantage of the latest technology and partly to protect European automotive electronics companies from Japanese competition.

The major obstacle to adoption of navigation systems is lack of data. Much of the traffic information is free, over the radio, but is often inadequate and too late to be of any real value. "This has resulted in navigation systems being classed as a gimmick," Mr Queré says.

Miniature computers are available with maps stored on memory cards, such as the Refalo from Kyocera. Notebook computers that communicate with other computers on the cellular telephone system are coming on the market from IBM and others and the British-made Global Portable Navigation System is a GPS-based location device selling at only a few hundred pounds.

Mr Queré envisages a portable computer combining all these features, that would direct the driver, tell the fleet manager where the car is and even connect with the roads authorities to pay road or toll charges.

CHRIS PARTRIDGE



Predictions: Chris Queré

Chalk. Cheese.



1989 Sierra LX.

1992 Sierra LX.

A pair of Sierras, both LX models. But the same car? Definitely not

Over the last 3 years alone, we've engineered in some dramatic changes on Sierra.

We have introduced a new range of 2.0 litre DOHC engines, a 1.8 litre turbo diesel and added four catalyst equipped engines.

Sierra. All high performance Sierras now transfer

their power to the road through the MT75 gearbox.

This lightweight, 5-speed transmission even has synchromesh on reverse.

While in the ride and handling department, the suspension has been tuned to make the Sierra both smoother and quieter.

The interior has been transformed by smart new trims, a restyled fascia, new instrument panel

and steering column adjustable for rake and reach.

The sunroof on Ghia models is now powered and leather upholstery is an option.

Estates, from the GLX up, now arrive with an integral styled roof rack. All Cosworth, 4x4 and Ghia models sport new style alloy wheels.

And GLS models now have alloy wheels too.

All GLS models and above, now have anti-lock

brakes and all 2.0 and 2.9 litre models now benefit from power steering.

Our picture clearly shows that the new Sierra is different. But, with the introduction of more than 400 further changes, only your Ford dealer can show you how much it has matured.



Everything we do is driven by you.

Ask your Ford dealer about Ford's Price Protection Policy and Aftercare package which includes one year's free RAC membership, security glass arching and (subject to status) a free loan vehicle for a week should yours be stolen in the first year. For a catalogue or the address of your Ford dealer, please call the Fleet Information Service free on 0245 283245

Wales rise above tarnished image

BY GERALD DAVIES

Wales, as Alan Davies, their coach, wisely keeps repeating, still have a long way



Let us also scotch another hare before it gets too far. But for the referee's curious decision, the argument ran on Saturday night, to call for a scrum and not allow Tualo his try 15 minutes into the second half. Wales would not have won this their second

This match lacked the snap and crackle usually associat-

Scrums	Award	Won	Ag	hd	Void
Wales	14	10		1	3
Scotland	20	14		1	5

Lineouts	Award	Won	Void
Wales	15	15	1
Scotland	23	18	9

	Run	Kick	Pass
Jones	4	8	21
Nicol	1	2	34
Jenkins	0	4	5
Chalmers	1	7	13
Kicks at goal			
	Total	Con	Miss
Jenkins	5	4	1
Chalmers	5	1	4
Chalmers	2	2	0

☐ Controlled by Uweke

H Williams-Jones (South Wales Police), E Lewis (Llensol), G Lewis (Newry), A Cookey (Llensol), R Webster (Carmarthen), S Davies (Gwent).

SCOTLAND: G Hastings (Westonians), A Stanger (Howick), S Hastings (Westonians), S Linnell (Glasgow/Hurley), I Tulcio (Solihull), C Chambers (Maidenhead), A Nicol (Gundee High School PA), D Gale (Edinburgh Academicals, capt), K Milne (Perth PA), A Burnell (London Scotland), rep: P Jones, Gloucester, D McIvor (Edinburgh Academicals), N Edwards (Paisley), G Weir (Midlothian), I Smith (Gloucester), D White (London Scotland), Walker, M Dundas (Perth).

Penalties/free kicks	Award	Tap	Goal	Miss
Wales	13	1	3	1
Scotland	18	6	3	4
Half backs				
	Run	Kick	Pass	
Jones	4	8	21	
Nicol	1	2	34	
Jenkins	0	4	5	
Chalmers	1	7	13	
Kicks at goal				
	Total	Con	Miss	
Jenkins	5	4	1	
Chalmers	5	1	4	
Chalmers	2	2	0	

☐ Contained by Linewe

BY PETER ELLIS

Barnes kicked, guided, linked, created and scored points with an aplomb that Rugby could only admire. Meanwhile, among the Bath

M Ellis, M Fleethood, S Smith, A
Ruddick, M Charles.
BATH: J Barney, A Swift, P De Glanville
(rep S Knight), J Guscott, J Fehor, S
Barnes, F Hill, V Ubogu, G Dawe, J Mallert.
S Ojoroh, M Haeg, N Redman, A
Robinson, B Clarke.
Referee: C High (RFU).

BY MICHAEL AUSTIN

Lancashire 29
Hampshire 9

BY MICHAEL STEVENSON

ire keep ta

The appearance of Thomas in a miss-move to produce Cornwall's second try for Weeks was equally as impressive as their first, which grew from Lait's break support

[illegible]

BY MICHAEL STEVENSON

Now Lancashire meet Cornwall at Twickenham on April 18. If the game should coincide with the outstanding Courage Clubs Championship match between Orrell

The Short twins at half back, Guyatt, their captain and centre, and Roach, a predatory flanker, all impressed, and the Hampshire pack will

Lancashire, with wind advantage were soon pressing, and they led 19-3 at half-time. Hampshire could not

NAME-SHIRT: N HOWARD (Basingstoke);
Wilson (Havant), S Boydell (Havant), D
Luyet (Basingstoke, capt), J Bates
Havant; C Short (Harefield), B Short
Harefield; D Rice (Havant), L Lillington
Basingstoke), J Garrett (Havant), P
Hewitson (Basingstoke), S Morgan (H-
avant), B Rouse (Havant), N Roschi (Havant),
A Hill (Basingstoke).
Referee: M J Baylis (RFU).

The French in springtime have been a joy to behold and here they had scope to indulge themselves. That included the provision of a guard of honour for the South African referee, Freek Burger. Burger responded with a certain amount of indulgence himself, notably when Lafond was allowed to start again after Geoghegan's tackle and create Penaud's second try, but it made no difference to the substance of the game.

Ireland must have known what was to come within the

[illegible]

Fenn bre

By A CORRESPONDENT

Navy's first-half pressure saw them open with a penalty by the full back, Kevin

SCORES: Royal Navy: Thy. Gibson, Conversionist: Bethwaite. Penalty goal: Bethwaite. Army: Tries: Bertini, Fern. Wood. Conversions: Walker (2).

ROYAL NAVY: K. J. Bethwaite, D. J. Gibson, C. Allcock, G. O'Loughlin, L. Oman, R. J. Perkins, P. Livingston (rep.), T. Torpey; N.W. Dunham, M. Clay, E. J. Cowie, M. Leatherland, S. T. French, I. Russell, S. Jones, R. W. Arminning.

ARMY: M. Walker, S. Bertini, H. Graham, W. Bramble, J. Fern, A. Deane, S. Pinder, D. Coghlan, C. Wood, J. Fowers, D. Orr-Ewing, C. Buse, T. Roobor, G. Richardson (rep.), S. Weng, S. Berryman.

BY BARRY TROWBRIDGE

In a tournament involving 512 clubs, it was improbable, but statistics take no account of determination or, indeed, experience. With those elements paramount on Saturday, both sides showed confidence in their ability.

A try in the right-hand corner by Leach, after a blind-side break by Barton, was

field, Smith put over his third successful penalty and Bloester were away. A try wide on the left by Lineares.

end, Gannon, with a second penalty goal, and Klenk, after linking twice with Green, pounded things off.

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RUGBY UNION RESULTS AND TABLES

Five nations' championship

FRANCE	44	IRELAND	12
France: Triest: Vadsu; 2; Pontard; 21; Ceolion. Cadomes. Sadoury. Conts: Vadsu 5; Pems: Vians 3; Ireland: Pems. 4; Wales 4			

WALES 15 SCOTLAND 12

Wales: Triest: Webster. Cons: Jenkins Pems: Jenkins 3; Scotland: Pems: Pems: 4; G Hastings: Dropped 9; Wales: Chalmers

Courage Clubs Championship First division

HARLEQUINS	21	SARACENS	37
Harlequins: Triest: Weardus 3; Glamorgan: Cons: Pears 3; Pen Pems: Saracens: Triest: Grogan Buckton: Cassid Rudling: Cons: Rudling 4; Pems: Rudling 3			

LEICESTER 51 RUSSIAN PK. 16

Leicester: Triest: Pems: 3; Lloy 2; Amurgh: Grogan: Cons: Lloy 7; Pems: Lloy 3; Russian: Pems: 2; Welsh: Wynn: Cons: Lloy 2

RUGBY 0 BATH 32

Bath: Triest: de Glanville Redman Swift

Falst: Cons: Cons: Barnes 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bath	9	7	1	1	159	88	14
Oxford	8	7	0	1	144	57	14
Leicester	8	6	1	1	130	75	13
Saracens	10	6	1	3	124	103	13
Gloucester	9	6	0	3	209	152	9
Worcester	11	4	4	3	97	89	8
Worcs	8	4	0	4	106	115	6
Warrington	8	3	3	4	105	89	6
Exeter	8	2	2	4	145	137	3
Leigh	8	2	2	4	99	162	3
Warrington	8	0	0	8	168	161	0
Mofflingham	8	0	0	8	141	141	0
Rosslyn PK	6	0	0	6	65	171	0

* 1 point deducted

Third division

Richmond	28	Headingley	13
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ADT County Championship Semi-finals

CORNWALL	22	YORKSHIRE	3
Cornwall: Triest: Mead. Weeks: Cons: Thomas. Pems: Thomas 4; Yorkshire: Pems: Rudling			

LANCASHIRE 20 HAMPSHIRE 9

LANCASHIRE: Triest: Mordap 3; Cleary. Kennel: Cons: Grayson 3; Pems: Grayson Hampshire: Triest: Bates Cons: Bates

Under-21 championship Semi-finals

Lancashire	10	Sumray	33
Leicester	10	Conestry	9

Inter-services match

The Army	9	Royal Navy	16
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Club matches

Aldgate	10	Isling	12
Stroud	21	Striving Co	16
Bristol	29	Plymouth	19
Cardiff	27	Avon	10
Glamorgan W	28	Newbridge	9
Newport	22	Glasgow Hk	22
Cardiff	22	London Hk	4
Pontypridd	44	Abertawe	10
Kelce	64	Langrath	0

PROVINCIAL INSURANCE CUP: Semi-finals

Leicester	3	Bedfordshire	14
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Bristol 15 Alchurch Kersal 6

DAILY MAIL UNDER-18 CHAMPIONSHIP: Semi-finals

Waterhampton	Bradford	Glamorgan	10
Worcester	10	Gloucester	10

21 RGS High Wycombe 12 Under-15

London Quakers 7, Loughborough GS 5

ack the
thal to
peers

Zinbao poised to repeat success in Folkestone sprint

JIMMY Quinn, still on cloud nine after winning the William Hill Lincoln on High Low, came off by landing the Aldington Handicap at Folkestone today on Zinbao.

At this early stage of the season I favour horses who have shown that they come to hand early and Zinbao did just that twelve months ago when landing the corresponding race by two lengths with 3lb less on his back.

John Benstead's sprinter also went on to win his next race at Nottingham where he accounted for that hardy annual, Cronk's Quality.

In preparing Zinbao for a second crack at today's prize, Benstead has followed precisely the same path that he took last year in that he has again given him a pipe-opener on Lingfield's all-weather track.

Running for the first time last year after his winter's rest, Zinbao finished fourth behind Predictable, Sarum and Orchard's Pet in the Goodwin's Handicap over seven furlongs on the Surrey track.

This time his third in the same race behind Appealing Times and Sarum, who had both won their previous races, was even less promising and he is my nap.

While Lester Piggott's many followers should certainly get a good run with Liffey River, who won on the track last July, I still feel that

Michael Phillips

Kissavos constitutes the main threat to Zinbao since he too has been in form on the all-weather tracks this winter.

If there is a trainer-jockey combination guaranteed to instil fear into the bookmaking fraternity, it is surely that of Neville Callaghan and Pat Eddery. Today they have a good chance of collecting with both Majed (1.45) and A.A. Bamba (4.45).

Majed, my selection for the Alkham Claiming Stakes, enjoyed a nice warm-up when finishing fifth at Southwell nine days ago while A.A. Bamba should retain the distance of the Kingsnorth Handicap since she is by Ship Anchor out of a mare by



Quinn rides the fancied Zinbao at Folkestone.

Nijinsky. Derby winners both.

Wynne Callaghan and Eddery will also be hopeful of winning the Rochester Graduation Stakes with Freddie Lloyd, who ran so well to finish sixth in the very valuable Raceday Gold Trophy at Redcar last autumn, I marginally prefer the Harry Thomson Jones-trained Ladag, who excelled when making a winning debut in the Windsor Castle Stakes at Royal Ascot last June.

On the jumping front at Higham, Kambalela Rammer can be given a sound chance of winning the Acomb Novices' Chase, judged on the way he performed behind Merry Master at Carlisle last time, even allowing for the fact that today's race will be run over a shorter distance.

'Flickie' Tackle, claimed for £26,000 out of Alex Scott's yard after winning three times on the Flat last year, has done sufficient in his two races over hurdles to suggest that he can reward his new connections in the Warden Novices' Hurdle.

Finally, the Chesterwood Maiden Hunter Chase looks at the mercy of Roundhead, whose performances in similar races at Ayr and Kelso give him an outstanding chance in this company.

Blinkered first time

FOLKESTONE: 3.15 Aintree The Bay, Cotton Bank.

Trainer believes Forest Tiger can beat Arazi

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

COULD the winner of an ordinary maiden race at Doncaster be the horse to topple the great Arazi this summer?

As unlikely as it may sound, Forest Tiger's judiciously easy victory on Saturday has served only to confirm the view held by the Green Forest colts' trainer, Mohammed Moubarak, that he, and not Francois Boutin, possesses the top three-year-old in training.

After watching Forest Tiger's successful racecourse debut in the Doncaster Exhibition Centre Maiden Stakes, Moubarak forecast: "This horse will never be beaten. He is the best I have ever seen."

His claim is backed up by the knowledge that last summer Forest Tiger "literally demolished" Made Of Gold on the gallops before the subsequent Royal Lodge Stakes winner finished second to Arazi in the Prix de la Salamandre at Longchamp.

More recently Forest Tiger has been easily beating other horses such as State Dancer (narrowly beaten under 10 stone in a decent handicap on Friday) without breaking into a sweat. "He has got so much class, we don't know yet what he can do," the trainer added.

Moubarak is already thinking ahead to the day when his star not only takes on Arazi

but emerges victorious. "I have been saying since last July that this horse is very special so that when the day arrives and we beat Arazi it won't be seen as a fluke," Moubarak said yesterday.

Forest Tiger's main target is the 2,000 Guineas for which he is as low as 12-1. His next race will be the Craven Stakes, where he will come up against Dr Devlin's Peter Chapple-Hyam's Dewhurst Stakes winner.

Chapple-Hyam was impressed by Forest Tiger's easy win but pointed out yesterday: "Dr Devlin would go faster down to the start than those horses which ran behind Forest Tiger."

Coincidentally, within minutes of Forest Tiger's win, Steve Caution arrived at Doncaster having flown back from France where he worked Arazi over 1,500 metres.

Caution is clearly excited by the prospect of riding the runaway Breeders' Cup Juvenile winner in European races, starting with the Prix Omnium II at Saint-Cloud on April 7.

"I was very pleased with the horse. The main reason I wanted to go back and ride him was to see the progress he had made from one week to the next."

"He had improved quite a bit and I think he is right on

course for his prep race. He's a very intelligent horse, that is the first thing that struck me."

"I rode him twice last week in a canter and a light piece of work. He is very relaxed and doesn't do any more than you ask him. But when you ask him to pick up and go past horses, he does it so effortlessly."

Interestingly, Caution has been impressed by Arazi's action and believes he would not have any difficulty handling Epsom, should he run in the Ever Ready Derby.

"I think he is a very handy horse and he would go round anything. I know people commented about him coming wide round the bend at Churchill Downs in the Breeders' Cup but he was ripping round that bend and he might have seen something and shied away from it. That horse could go around anything. He's so well balanced and adaptable."

Caution, who rode Affirmed to victory in the Kentucky Derby in 1978, will not be able to ride Arazi in the Churchill Downs showpiece on May 2, but he is already looking forward to Boutin's three-year-old "coming back to Epsom for the Derby and finishing up his campaign in Europe."

Point-to-point, page 35

RESULTS: FARN

Doncaster

Going: good

2.00 (5.1), Other One (G. Duffield, 25-1); 1. Totality Unseen (11-2); 3. Greenwich Chase (25-1); 4. Churnish (25-1); 5. 100 (5.1); 6. 100 (5.1); 7. 100 (5.1); 8. 100 (5.1); 9. 100 (5.1); 10. 100 (5.1); 11. 100 (5.1); 12. 100 (5.1); 13. 100 (5.1); 14. 100 (5.1); 15. 100 (5.1); 16. 100 (5.1); 17. 100 (5.1); 18. 100 (5.1); 19. 100 (5.1); 20. 100 (5.1); 21. 100 (5.1); 22. 100 (5.1); 23. 100 (5.1); 24. 100 (5.1); 25. 100 (5.1); 26. 100 (5.1); 27. 100 (5.1); 28. 100 (5.1); 29. 100 (5.1); 30. 100 (5.1); 31. 100 (5.1); 32. 100 (5.1); 33. 100 (5.1); 34. 100 (5.1); 35. 100 (5.1); 36. 100 (5.1); 37. 100 (5.1); 38. 100 (5.1); 39. 100 (5.1); 40. 100 (5.1); 41. 100 (5.1); 42. 100 (5.1); 43. 100 (5.1); 44. 100 (5.1); 45. 100 (5.1); 46. 100 (5.1); 47. 100 (5.1); 48. 100 (5.1); 49. 100 (5.1); 50. 100 (5.1); 51. 100 (5.1); 52. 100 (5.1); 53. 100 (5.1); 54. 100 (5.1); 55. 100 (5.1); 56. 100 (5.1); 57. 100 (5.1); 58. 100 (5.1); 59. 100 (5.1); 60. 100 (5.1); 61. 100 (5.1); 62. 100 (5.1); 63. 100 (5.1); 64. 100 (5.1); 65. 100 (5.1); 66. 100 (5.1); 67. 100 (5.1); 68. 100 (5.1); 69. 100 (5.1); 70. 100 (5.1); 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SECRETARIES

Who will be
European
Secretary of
the Year?



LIFE & TIMES

MONDAY MARCH 23 1992



LOOKS

A pot-pourri
of fashion
from the
streets of Paris

Peril at the gates of paradise

With the main parties' policies looking increasingly similar, there is a real danger that inertia will nibble away at the benefits of liberal democracy. David Selbourne analyses Britain's fin de siècle malaise

Beyond the budget arguments, the glib soundbites and the empty clamour of the hustings, there is an anxious theme in this election which the politicians cannot address. It is the dangerous sense in the country that the political game is one thing and reality — the reality of a nation in continuing decline — another.

The perennial optimism, while in the dark, is always quick to deride the doubting Thomases, the gloomy spoil-sport who wrecks the party with his disbelief that there are better times to come soon, or at all. But even the more phlegmatic may have begun to feel discomfort at having their intelligences insulted by mediocre politicians as a matter of daily routine. Manufacturing industry is in deepest recession, but the production of political drivel roars on unchecked.

In the competition to demean the voter, it is hard to choose between the contestants in matters of hot air, dullness of mind, pretending to be prudent, banality masquerading as serious purpose, and false promise presented as strategy for the future. Meanwhile, the national unease about the economy, Britain's prospects in Europe, its flagging self-regard, and many other related matters deepens.

This malaise is matched in the ideological sphere, where the blurring of most distinctions between right, left and centre has given the elector the choice (in a fog of words) only between different shades of moral and intellectual grey. Platform decor, party symbols and the small print of policy 'packages' — ugly word — may differ, but it is the cut of a man's jibe and the quality of his speechwriters which are now becoming decisive.

Not surprisingly, there is also an ominous new party forming, millions of whose members are young, including the brightest and best of an entire generation. This is the party not of the floating voters or the don't know, but of the don't care. To them it is now a matter of shrugging indifference whether the victor's laurel crowns the pate of one enthusiastic mediocrity or another, a Kinnock or a Major, to go no further.

Behind all this, however, are much more profound developments, the fault of no individual politician. Chief among them is the world-wide failure of the Utopian socialist ideal. It has helped to drive Labour even further into a no-man's land of ideological muddle, its moral aspiration now reduced to avoiding a fourth electoral defeat. Labour appeals to the electorate for help. But how can the party provide the country with a sense of direction when, like all the world's left parties, it lacks such a sense of direction itself?

Without the 'threat' of the left, the right has also suffered, in Britain its passions too have waned. Indeed, the succession to the Tory leadership of the right-and-left Major — now you see his principles, now you don't — has given Conservatives an ideological chameleon to follow, but God



knows where. As for the centre party, the party which once could simply split the ideological differences between the other two, it now has fewer such differences to split than ever. Foxes have been shot to right and left: much of the old political landscape, the empty game of the hustings apart, has vanished.

Indeed, there is a political consensus, but not one to flatter the politician: ideas, in particular Big Ideas, have disappeared from the political agenda. However, here one must be careful. For even if there were Big Ideas about — the Tory Citizen's Charter is decidedly not one, and most electors would be hard put to think of any in the prospectuses from Labour and the Liberal Democrats — a nation with a shrinking attention-span (and chronic suspicion of intellectuals) would be no better pleased. Continuous insults to the intelligence, in parliament and the mass media, in the schoolroom and the pulpit, have taken their toll. Physical blows to the head have the same effect.

Once, great issues could divide, and unite, the nation, and make the pulse beat faster. Even without today's technologies, an entire people's attention could be engaged and held now, at the touch of a button, we can (and must) switch channels.

But go deeper, and there is even less for which to blame the passing politician, with his ephemeral manifestos and windy declara-

tions. For this is the *fin de siècle* and more people than we can tell have caught its mood even without knowing it: this mood may even be part-responsible for the persistence of the recession. To those with the most pessimistic turn of mind an apocalypse beckons, and one to dwarf the outcome of a mere election; that of a poisoned, violent and iteming planet stewing terminally in its own juices, undone by *Homo sapiens* and beyond the reach of Mr Kinnock's rhetoric or Mr Major's Charter.

But there are others who continue optimistically to search for a political ideal. The left's failures have made an alternative Utopia, however unattainable, urgent for many. It is not surprising therefore that Francis Fukuyama's Utopia should have won an audience. Against the prospect of apocalypse, any compensatory promise of a Utopia would. But his version of it could never satisfy the kinds of idealist for whom socialism once provided a vision of nirvana.

Why? Because the stuff of Utopian aspiration has always had to do, in essence, with a simple question: "What way of living

could there be other than the unhappy way in which we live now?"

Mr Fukuyama's answer — despite increasingly slippery qualifications of his original idea — is that there is no other way to live than the way we live now, in our liberal democratic and capitalist systems, whatever their defects. But this answer can please nobody for long: Mr Fukuyama, in wiser moments, even knows this himself.

Nevertheless, he has been trying to insist not only that capitalist democracy has vanquished its foes, but that it is the object of universal aspiration. With the overthrow of communism, the gates to a political paradise have been flung open to all states and their peoples. Many nations, governed by the sweet reason of parliamentarism and the free market, already gaze upon political ambrosia. Others, recently escaped from the totalitarian scourge, are newly arrived, licking their wounds but saved. The rest, unredeemed by the march of reason and progress, gaze longingly towards the democratic promised land.

More, however, in Britain and invisible to the outsider, there is in many people a growing weariness with the reduction of the democratic process to the exchange of pre-packaged falsehood, the media one-liner, the hurried visit to the polling booth, between TV programmes, and the return of yet another politician of no distinction to the House of Commons.

In a declining nation struggling with recession, we will find our-

selves, if we are not careful, little by little moving away from the political 'steady-state' which is now taken for granted.

Mr Fukuyama, adding to every illusion, declares (in some moods) that the "really big questions" of morality and economy, of rights and duties, of liberty and civic order have been solved by the "answers" which liberal democracy provides. They have not, because they cannot be. Instead, the passionate allegiances of right and left on such questions have temporarily ebbed away with socialism's failure. Moreover, we suppress or lose such passions at our peril, since they are at heart moral passions. That so many politicians of left, right and centre seem, and are, indistinguishable in their sentiments, their rhetoric and their party programmes, one from the other, is no cause for celebration.

This is, in part, because Mr Fukuyama has got it wrong. There is no Utopia, whether of left, right or centre.

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In next month's leaden procession to the polling stations, those electors who vote will do their liberal democratic duties, as ever. But the lack of ardour (except for office, vision and intellect in so many of the politicians for whom they will be voting) will exact its own toll, and in its own good time.

David Selbourne's new book *The Spirit of the Age* is to be published by Sinclair-Stevenson.

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TOMORROW
The decline of the don

'It is hard to choose between the contestants in matters of hot air, dullness of mind pretending to be prudent...'

Trying to find lots of things not to do

Those who are alert to the fine nuances of Radio 4 will have noticed that I am not Jonathan Dimbleby. More precisely, that there has been an interruption in my normal practice of going vocal on Wednesday mornings to solicit the life-stories and philosophies of the great, the good and the just plain odd.

Studio B 14 is strangely silent, bereft of its floating population of actors, survivors, mavericks, geniuses, strip artists, cockroaches and players upon exotic musical instruments. For *Midweek* is off the air: replaced in the interests of the democratic process by *Election Call*. If they so wish, the mavericks and cockroach-fanciers may phone up and harass captive politicians instead.

As, indeed, may I. There is an old mixture of thrill and dismay about an unexpected month of paid furlough. A hole yawns in the middle of the week. There are tasks to fill it, of course: all freelance workers live with gulls sometimes, on spotting a particular publisher's editor at a party, I have been reduced to dropping on all fours behind the nearest sofa rather than meet those reproachful eyes. But nevertheless there is a brief sense of stolen leisure.

Naturally, I have used it. I put in some heavy training on cup-cakes for my role as second anchor in the *Middleton Ladies' Tug-o-War Team* (we beat Westleton, thank you. Hauled 'em off their feet). I have fitted in a couple of days' flu, during which I fell asleep during PM and woke up at the end of *The Archers* feverishly and tearfully convinced that Paddy Ashdown was being forced to have his Middle White sow Freda put down because of the Labour budget. I tried tidying my desk, but stopped because whenever I open the drawerful of old work I start reading it and trying to work out when my heyday was, or whether I ever had one, which leads to maudlin drinking.

Most of all, tiny and finite though my own lay-off is, I have been brooding about all those others who find themselves paid not to go to work. Like doctors under investigation: the other week we heard that in the past six years, some 70 senior doctors have been suspended with pay and that there are at least 19 hanging around for a verdict to lift them out of limbo. Or teachers: the NUT couldn't say how many exist in similar suspension, but anecdotal evidence suggests quite a few. Nor

WORKING LIFE

Libby Purves on how to fill three weeks of unexpected paid leave



does anyone seem to tot up the number of police, clergy, or lawyers in that state.

The secret idlers of industry are even more hard to number. Straw-polling, though, quickly revealed an engineer suspected of taking bribes (and later cleared) who built his neighbour a 15ft tall rocky during his five months' layoff, and a managing director whose company was whisked from under him

in a corporate shakeup, but whose contract debars him from working for anyone else for a year. He is irritating his family by making flow charts of their daily activities. And in newspapers we have one of the most famous examples of all: Times Newspapers' staff journalists, who were paid for over a year during the print strike to produce no newspaper.

If you are tempted to think it was fun, hear a veteran such as Philip Howard, then the literary editor: he offers a sad little portrait of their day: "We would come to work out of habit, have a news conference, pass on the gossip and then drift off to the pub. Then we drifted rather sadly home again." At least they could gather round the old tribal fire: unlike the suspended copper barred from the station, the teacher deprived of children, it hardly bears thinking of.

But what do you do all day, when you are salaried but unemployed? Apart, that is, from worry about the doom of disgrace or redundancy which might follow? Since the prime cure for worry is work, such suffering should not be treated lightly. But the fact remains that from day to day, one must do something. Some write books or, moonlight, but on the

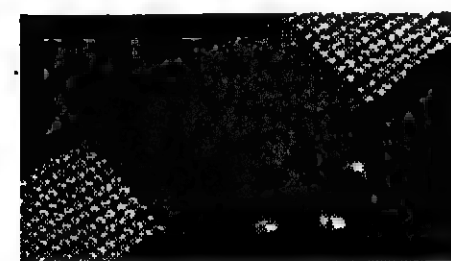
whole, though, the suspended are probably best occupied in completely different jobs. These provide both a challenge and a bracing symbolic two-fingers to your real profession. Like the policeman who devoted his limbo to fitting out a steel yacht. The idea was to sail away quick if the enquiry found against him: it didn't, and he sold the boat. The buyer tells me that bits kept falling off it presumably the ones screwed on during particularly black moments of self-doubt.

Philip Howard of *The Times* became a butler — an inspired choice, since literary editors and Jeeveses require similar gravitas and eyebrow-lifting skills. "I was a good butler," he recalls with simple pride. "I once served a buffet supper for a thousand gynaecologists, and the Queen."

Now there's a thought. Let it be known that I am available, in black dress and frilly apron, for functions on the next three Tuesday evenings. Turn up your collars, diners, and beware the flying scampi. After 20 years safely immersed in white-collar occupations, the World's Worst Waitress walks again.

TOMORROW
Mid-Life: Neil London

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THE WORLD'S LEADING FINE ART AUCTION HOUSE

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COPELLA: The Scottish Ballet moves to Edinburgh this week, presenting the company's first production, the first time the company has ever performed outside Scotland. Tonight's cast is headed by principal ballerina Noriko Ohta. Her Majesty's Theatre, Rosemount Viaduct, Edinburgh (0224 641122), 7.30pm.

BODY AND SOUL: A topical new drama by Roy Kinnear explores the moral, legal and ethical questions raised by the Church of England on the ordination of women. Starring Robert Hardy and Angela Thorne. The production is on a nationwide tour prior to a West End run. Alexandra Theatre, Suffolk Street, Queensway, Birmingham (021-653 2525), 7.30pm.

EUROPEAN ORNAMENTS: A new permanent gallery (in the Henry Cole Wing) devoted to European design and decoration 1450-1900. In this post-modern age, "ornament" is no longer a dirty word. But the new gallery goes further by demonstrating clearly the uses and abuses of ornament, the way particular design motifs travel and are transformed, the influences of architecture and European's fascination with the exotic. Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London SW7 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, Sun, 2.30-5.30pm.

HOGARTH AND PIRANESI: Hogarth and Piranesi were contemporaries, both famous in their own time and later as printmakers. Showing them together is a good excuse to flaunt some of the Courtauld Institute's possessions, notably the 20-odd Hogarth engravings given by Sir Robert Witt in 1944 and the 14 splendid Piranesi etchings bequeathed by Count Antonio Salani in 1978.

ANNA KARENINA: A new production of the Russian novel by Leo Tolstoy, directed by Michael Boyd. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

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TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Karl Knight

COURTAULD INSTITUTE GALLERIES: Somerset House, Strand, WC2 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, Sun, 2.30-5.30pm, until June 7.

REFLECTED GLORY: Ronald Harwood's new play follows the relationship of two brothers: one a successful restaurateur, the other a playwright. The cast includes Robert Hardy and Angela Thorne. The production is on a nationwide tour prior to a West End run. Alexandra Theatre, Suffolk Street, Queensway, Birmingham (021-653 2525), 7.30pm.

THE MIST: Tom Courtenay brings his brand of deadpan comedy to the stage in this play, in the good-humoured production by Graham Murray, with a new translation by Robert Cragg. A strong cast includes Polly James. Dates at Cambridge and Stratford to follow. Yvonne Arnaud, Millbrook, Guildford (0483 60191), 7.45pm.

LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES: The Royal Shakespeare Company in a new production of Christopher Marlowe's celebrated adaptation of the French classic, set in pre-revolutionary France. Stephen Dillane directs; sumptuous 18th-century designs by Bob Crowley. Swanage Theatre, Kingston Road, Poole (0202 82222), 7.45pm.

MY FAIR LADY: The Lerner and Loewe musical gets an invigorating new look from stage designer David Fielding (echoing his work with English National Opera) and English Jumper Salani in 1978.

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TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS: Last seen in the country supporting Bob Dylan in 1987, the hard-hitting American rockers descend to take centre stage this time around. Wembley Arena, Wembley, Middlesex (081-800 1234), 7.30pm.

SOME LIKE IT HOT: But what we got is a new production of the classic musical comedy. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

A SWELL PARTY: Four singers, two pianists in a tribute to Cole Porter's wit and very melodic. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

MAKING IT BETTER: James Saunders' new play concerns a family, reality and reputation in Prague and London. James Saunders in an ensemble cast of four. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

TALKING HEADS: Patrick Markey and Alan Bennett are in the first of their new plays, *Talking Heads*. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

UNCLE VANYA: Ian McKellen and Anthony Sher are in the new production of the classic play by Anton Chekhov. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

LONG RUNNERS: A new production of the play by Long Runners. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

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PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: A new production of the play by Phantom of the Opera. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

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RICKIE LEE JONES: Still best remembered for her 1979 hit "Knockin' on Heaven's Door", the critically acclaimed singer is currently promoting an acoustic jazz album of unusual cover versions featuring songs by artists as diverse as Duke Ellington and Cole Porter. National Stadium, Dublin (01-452 3531 3532/3), 7.30pm.

TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS: Last seen in the country supporting Bob Dylan in 1987, the hard-hitting American rockers descend to take centre stage this time around. Wembley Arena, Wembley, Middlesex (081-800 1234), 7.30pm.

SOME LIKE IT HOT: But what we got is a new production of the classic musical comedy. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

A SWELL PARTY: Four singers, two pianists in a tribute to Cole Porter's wit and very melodic. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

MAKING IT BETTER: James Saunders' new play concerns a family, reality and reputation in Prague and London. James Saunders in an ensemble cast of four. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

TALKING HEADS: Patrick Markey and Alan Bennett are in the first of their new plays, *Talking Heads*. Theatres, London SW1 (071-462 0600), Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun, 2.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm.

UNCLE VANYA: Ian McKellen and Anthony Sher are in the new production

Crazy cure for Broadway's old maladies

Mike Ockrent (below), the British director now enjoying his second New York musical hit with *Crazy for You*, has written a new novel about the Great White Way. He talks to Matt Wolf

Twenty years ago, Mike Ockrent was a lapsed physicist turned theatre director, making his name in Scotland. Now, aged 45, he is in international demand, one of a trio of British directors (Trevor Nunn and Nicholas Hytner are the others) whose name on a Broadway musical virtually ensures production. It is no surprise, then, to discover from his home in north London that his thoughts are centred on Manhattan.

Last month Ockrent opened on Broadway the hit musical *Crazy for You*, loosely adapted from George and Ira Gershwin's 1930 *Girl Crazy*, which looks set to be among the most successful indigenous American musicals of the past decade. In addition, he has written his first novel, *Running Down Broadway*, which is being published in Britain this week. Its topic? The triumphs and tribulations of working the Great White Way.

"The excitement in New York is enormous," Ockrent says, obviously undeterred by the high-stakes, hit-or-miss atmosphere which has driven many a comparable director from New York. "Having grown up on Moss Hart's *Act One* (the lyricist's memoir of a life on Broadway), to me that's what I expected it to be like so I was fully prepared and happy to accept it." Besides, he argues, the adrenalin can be productive. "When you do a musical, especially in the States, you need that. Without it, the show itself has no brio. It all becomes lacklustre and dull."

There is brio to spare in the behind-the-scenes shenanigans chronicled in *Running Down Broadway*, which Ockrent finished last summer just prior to American rehearsals for *Crazy for You*. In the novel, one John Lewis flees his solitary life in Willesden and his job on a Fleet Street newspaper to write a book chronicling a Broadway musical on, of all topics, Galileo. The show's creators are rarely when satirical kerousness will suffice and Lewis finds himself an awestruck witness to power-plays between the producer, George Gibson, and the dying director, Ross Boardman. Any similarities to the real-life



scenario of David Merrick and Gower Champion, — Merrick announced Champion's death in 1980 from the stage at the opening night of the show *42nd Street* — are coincidental, Ockrent insists. While Broadway insiders will have fun guessing the real-life identity of characters such as composer Jerry Trinflock, the author says his intention was to evoke a mood, not to score points. "The book is made up of elements of all sorts of people I've known and have come across and imagined, all of them heightened and larger than life," says Ockrent, whose London credits include Cameron Mackintosh's production of *Follies* in 1987. "What interests me most is that relationship between the director and the producer in the commercial theatre, which can be quite fruity and argumentative. But it's probably healthy; it keeps everything vibrant and alive."

It helps, too, when that relationship results in a hit, which Ockrent's two Broadway musicals have both been. Having received rather tepid reviews from American critics visiting London, a snappier Broadway version of *Me and My Girl* went on to get 13 Tony nominations and run three and a half years in New York.

Its success there, as well as elsewhere internationally, has subsidised Ockrent ever since, freeing him to do only those projects that appeal; as opposed to staging five shows a year to pay for "the bikes

and birthdays, all the things that middle-class north London kids need and want."

With *Crazy for You* he found himself the lone British creator of a glossy musical pastiche that could not be more American, and he acknowledges that the situation had its absurdities. "Often I'd catch myself thinking 'What am I doing here?'" Ockrent recalls. "We were holding auditions in Los Angeles, and I suddenly heard myself saying with this plummy north London voice, 'Could you try that with a little more Western twang?'"

Later, in New York, he became tongue-tied on the pronunciation of the word "can't". "I was giving notes to Harry (star Harry Groener) about 'They Can't Take That Away from Me' and I couldn't figure out which way to say the word. I couldn't decide how to give the note."

Granted with near-unanimous raves when it opened, *Crazy for You* currently carries an advance sale of \$7 million (\$4.1 million), and seems a sure bet to win the Best Musical Tony award in June. Frank Rich in the *New York Times* used its opening to announce that the Broadway musical had after a decade finally been wrested away from the British, a sentiment which left the show's English director bemused, to say the least.

"I found that terribly flattering and odd and confusing at the same time," says Ockrent. "I remember Andrew Lloyd Webber the year *Cats* opened on Broadway saying he hoped it would be the birth of a real sense of exchange between London and New York, and that seemed exactly the right remark to make. In a way, it's sad that it's become so much to do with them versus us."

Still, a 100 per cent track record for his Broadway musicals is no small achievement, and Ockrent must now spend the next few years' shepherding various productions of *Crazy for You* around the world. (A London version opens next year.)

In the straight play sector, though, Ockrent's American ven-



Crazy for You set to be among the most successful indigenous American musicals of the decade

tures have fared less well. A pre-Broadway tour of *Educating Rita*, an RSC and West End success for Ockrent and playwright Willie Russell, closed on the road. *Once a Catholic*, Mary O'Malley's long-running London hit, lasted less than a week on Broadway, as did Rowan Atkinson's stand-up routine, both of them directed by Ockrent.

"You find yourself thinking, 'This is English, and they don't respond to it so it might as well go quickly'. In some ways it's much better to get a show off fast than to

let it die a lingering death." Looking ahead, Ockrent plans more work in television and film — his one movie credit to date is Russell's *Dancing Through the Dark* — and he will next direct a BBC play by Tim Firth. But as he sits through more and more authors, the director realises it is the scale of his work, not the work itself, that has changed.

"The truth is that it's only a question of degree," says Ockrent, a scientist's son who began in the theatre while nominally studying physics at Edinburgh University.

"Some of the best work and the most fun I've ever had was at Perth Rep with Joan Knight when I first started."

"Sitting in that balcony looking at the stage is only a slightly different experience from watching *Crazy for You* from the balcony of the Shubert Theatre. It's all about degree: the principles and the basis of your work remain the same."

● *Running Down Broadway* is published by Nick Hern Books at £14.99.

ARTS BRIEF

Saved in time

JOHN DRUMMOND and his European Arts Festival have come to the rescue of the nascent Almeida-English National Opera contemporary opera festival, to be called Almeida Opera. The event's debut was cancelled last year when the Almeida Theatre's London Boroughs Grants Scheme money was cut.

Almeida Opera, running from July 1 to 18, will not be an official part of Drummond's six-month festival, but it will come at the start of the European event thanks to £40,000 from Drummond, £50,000 from the Peter Moores Foundation and £50,000 from the new London Arts Board, plus about another £40,000 from private sponsorship. A further £50,000 is still needed to ensure that a new work by John Tavener, *Mary of Egypt*, jointly commissioned by Almeida Opera and the Aldeburgh Festival, is part of the new festival.

Dancing on

SO SUCCESSFUL is Brian Friel's Irish memory play, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, that its West End run has been extended. The producers have announced that the play, which enters its second year on the West End this week, will continue at the Garrick Theatre until at least September 19. The original Abbey Theatre production has enjoyed international acclaim since its National Theatre debut in 1990, winning every major Best Play award in Britain. Its Broadway run also continues, although box-office takings dipped dramatically after the original Irish cast left at the beginning of March; meanwhile, 15 new productions are currently planned worldwide.

Celebrating

HARD on the heels of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, which celebrates its 150th anniversary later this week, comes the New York Philharmonic, which has just announced details of its 150th anniversary season. The actual anniversary falls on December 7, when Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta and Pierre Boulez (the present music director and his two immediate predecessors) share the conducting. Fittingly, Masur will conduct Dvořák's *New World Symphony*, to which the New York Philharmonic gave the world premiere a hundred years ago.



New York news: Pierre Boulez

The season opens in September with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, the first work ever performed by the orchestra, and concludes in June next year with a week-long festival of music by Leonard Bernstein, who had a 47-year relationship with the orchestra. Thirty-six composers have been commissioned to write new works celebrating the anniversary, including Messiaen and the British composer Oliver Knussen; 13 will be premiered during the season.

Last chance...

WITH the phenomenal success of "Stay", which has been at the top of the UK chart for more than a month, Shakespeare's Sister has consolidated an enviable reputation for coining classic romantic pop themes with an imaginative, left-field flourish. Convinced at the tail-end of the Eighties, the incongruous coupling of American vocal virtuoso Marcella Detroit and the ex-Bananarama girl Siobhan Fahey has proved a refreshing and seductive alternative to the vacuum charms of most mainstream pop contenders. Although the pair write their songs together, it is Detroit, with her four-and-a-half octave range, who dominates the live show. The costumes are pretty dazzling too. Shakespeare's Sister's British tour ends at Town & Country in London (071-284 0303) tomorrow and Wednesday.

THEATRE

The trouble with keeping Mum

Straight and Narrow
Wyndham's

THE women tended to be loud and bossy, the men timid and gormless. They were to be found in raucous pier-end entertainments and on Donald McGill postcards and, at the sophisticated end of the market, in realistic comedies by north-country dramatists. It would surprise me if such figures did not barge and bumble about Jitonic Chinn's imagination as he grew up in suburban Manchester. In many ways his likeable *Straight and Narrow* is the traditional Lancashire play, freshened up for the 1990s.

Nobody says "by gum" or "ee lad" any more. Home is a mock-Tudor semi, not the scrubbed terrace of yesteryear. The characters, though still wary of foreigners, seem to take their holidays in Malta, not Blackpool. But the centre of their tiny universe continues to be Mum: a natural despot who blithely sentimentalises the husband she drove to the grave and does her best to entomb her brood in her pet notions of what is respectable and right.

All three children fall prey to her busybodying ego. Nona (Anna Keaveney) is having marital troubles with Arthur (John Hartley), one of those big, bashful dopes who used regularly to blunder through Lancashire plays. Lois (Melanie Kilburn) is pregnant yet again by Bill (Peter Jonfield), a person and an event not to Mum's liking. Worse, Bob (Nicholas



Vera (Carmel McSharry) tries to separate Jeff (Neil Dargatzis, left) and Bob (Nicholas Lyndhurst)

Lyndhurst) not only refuses to find a nice wife, but returns from a trip to the Mediterranean shuffling along with his live-in friend Jeff (Neil Dargatzis) about — but Mum can't fathom the reasons for all the flouncing and bad language.

We can, though. Lyndhurst's wan, weebegone Bob is the narrator as well as a participant, and wryly lets slip his secrets. He is, as Mum would say, "not quite right": a homosexual homebody at odds with a lover who is fretting at the domestic bit. It is Bob's edgy, fibbing encounters with Mum that provide the play with most of its tension; and here Chinn's touch is flawless.

Carmel McSharry, a creased blend of ancient maffiosi and old sofa, is equally unerring as the matriarchal Vera. Her children see through her dour warnings, her fake benevolence, and all her guilt-mongering manipulations; but they still squirm when she says things like "there's always trouble when I try to lend a helping hand: sometimes I think I'd be better off in a home". That her complaints are a bit repetitive matters not a jot. Whenever she is in full flood, the evening is a delight.

Chinn is admirably served by actors who, in Allan Davis's production, have the offhanded rapport of people who have been

wearily tolerating each other for years. He is also quite a find himself: not a moral or emotional heavyweight, perhaps, but a fresh, funny middlebrow with a keen yet sympathetic eye for family gamesmanship. There is a moment towards the end when Lyndhurst's Bob, drawing on his flimsy reserves of courage, asks McSharry's Vera if she has anything to ask him. "I don't think so," comes the answer; and we see that at some unacknowledged level she knows what he is, and he knows she knows. Many a more pretentious writer could not suggest that.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

TELEVISION REVIEW

Tyranny, trials and tribulations

AS IF the result of this year's election were not enough to worry about, John Cooper's political thriller *The Law Lord* (Screen Two, BBC 2 last night, director: Jim Goddard) imagined that in 1996 the Conservatives are back in power and strong enough to sort out the judiciary. If today's climate of opinion is anything to go by, this reform would be hailed as truly popular, but wait: what the devilish new Home Secretary has in mind is not merely a little consistency in sentencing, and the tougher the better, but a bench of pliant judges who will not obstruct his vision of "a compassionate government concerned for the country's good". Translated from Weaselspeak, this means rigging trials and bullies for those who disagree.

Cooper implied that the self-selecting system works in this direction already, which was hard to reconcile with the premise of his play, where the Home Secretary replaced a perfectly compliant Lord Chancellor with Anthony Andrews, a simple barrister, clear-eyed and half the age of any of the judges around. Presumably the intention was to bend him as he went along, but the plan goes wrong as Andrews begins to learn the secrets of the Lord Chancellor's office. In a room without a window, shelves of folders record the doings of every barrister likely to become a judge; judges who get too uppity — in other words, too neutral and not reliable — are

"starved", as the jargon has it. We saw one such judge sitting in the Victoria Tower Gardens looking very hungry indeed.

Nuggets of constitutional knowledge came our way, easily for the most part, and tidbits of legal practice. Members of the bar, it seems, do not shake hands with each other. Not many people know that. Eventually Andrews stopped smiling faintly and in one full-face shot became as cross as James Cagney, though with calmer eyebrows. Refusing to play the government's dirty game, he is impeached and tried by his peers before a stained glass window representing Westminster Hall. Here he delivered the sort of heroic speech beloved of old-fashioned political drama, but he ended dead, just like Lord Chancellor Thomas More all those years ago.

The performances were likeable enough, with Bernard Hill's arch-villain chewing his lip like a true conspirator, unless he was winning at the orange wallpaper in the Home Office. I would not like to say that the press has always come to the aid of the individual and hang the party, but the absence of any indication of newspaper concern once the judges started resigning *en masse*, dying and getting themselves imprisoned in Dorney Wood, suggests that Cooper may believe the press has been nobbled already. Dear me.

JEREMY KINGSTON

CLASSICAL RECORDS

Tempting array of early delights

BY THE time Monteverdi published his "madrigals of love and war", in 1638, the form could embrace anything from chirpy little songs to miniature operas: the range from love to war was rather less wide, since the same imagery of pursuit, yielding and death could serve for both.

Andrew Parrott's selection from the volume is a brilliant window into this repertory, the rhythm light and agile and word-centred as it has to be, the voices fresh and clear but at the same time sensuously enjoying themselves, the instrumental support nimble and dexterous. "For che'ciel", a marvellous setting of a Petrarch sonnet, begins in cool darkness and ends on a

breath-takingly erotic swell of women's voices. The "Lamento della ninfa", most operatic of these pieces, has the girl's sweet-melancholy song of abandonment beautifully placed in the narrative frame of three male voices, bending in to sympathise without being quite able to reach to console.

The excellent group Tragicomedia, an ensemble of voices with the pluck and twangling but taut accompaniment of strings, lutes, harps and keyboards, offers a conspectus of English music

from much the same period, but covering a broader range. Again there are tiny dramas, these in several songs by Robert Johnson, whose setting of "Full fathom five" for the original *Tempest* is included here. But there are also Herrick songs by William Lawes, as bright and

clear as folksong, and fantastical instrumental pieces by the same composer, all done with a daring extravagance and immediacy. This is altogether a long, choice and fascinating survey of the musical luxuries of the early Stuarts, with a relish for the naivety that marks the music

off from that of Monteverdi.

The gap between England and the Continent, but a century earlier, is further suggested by two recent discs from the Tallis Scholars, who seem to make a winner every time. Their selection from Heinrich Isaac — who worked for the Emperor Maximilian, contemporary of Henry VII — proposes a fine and sonorous expression of the new humanism, mostly richer in texture than Josquin's music, but equally lucid. But turn to Tallis's Marian antiphon, *Salve*

intererata, from the reign of Henry VIII, and it is as if all this had never happened: the voices do not interfold but budge against each other in long, vegetal lines, with the top part way up there in pinnacles of sound. Later and more familiar Tallis is different again: the calm after the storm. However, there is no other recording I know that makes the calm of the Lamentations so full and living: a manner not just of splendid tone but also of phrasing with the intensest effort. Because of its spread, and because of its superbness, this is one of the best things Peter Phillips and his singers have achieved.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

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Colonel Stephen Love tells Michael Evans about accusations of incompetence in the 1982 war

Falklands facts

Even ten years later, the finger-pointing and accusations can make Colonel Stephen Love angry. He sits in his drawing room overlooking a valley that stretches towards the Dart estuary and picks through the documents he keeps in a box file.

The file is not marked "Falklands war" but inside are letters, signals and reports to back up his argument that the British embassy in Buenos Aires did not fail in its duty in early 1982 to warn of an impending Argentine invasion of Britain's South Atlantic colony.

Colonel Love is a sheep farmer now and in the middle of lambing at his 125-acre farm near Brixham in Devon. He ended his army career as an artilleryman in 1983 and he and his wife took a course at an agricultural college. He had no previous experience, although he says that dealing with sheep is similar to handling artillery. "With guns you stick it all in the back and it comes out the front, with sheep you stick it in the front and it comes out the back."

His solid, attractive house, a mixture of 12th and 19th-century architecture, sits on a plateau looking south-west. When the south-westerly wind comes up through the valley, it can bend the windows. He has been up most of the night delivering lambs and occasionally his mind drifts away from the subject matter. But it is soon back again.

In 1982, when the Argentine generals and admirals were plotting to seize the Falklands from the British, Colonel Love was defence attaché in the embassy in Buenos Aires. He had travelled widely during his army career but this was his first appointment as an attaché. The embassy in Buenos Aires was, he says, a tightly run ship. His "boss", Sir Anthony Williams, was a charming, friendly ambassador, whose career was to be destroyed by the events.

Colonel Love is an honourable man. He feels that as the tenth anniversary of the invasion approaches, he is the only one who can speak out on behalf of the embassy and explain exactly what happened in the weeks leading up to the Argentine venture. Sir Anthony is dead and most of the others working at the embassy at the time are still serving. He is spurred by recent comments made in a television programme by Nick Barker, the former captain of HMS Endurance, the ice patrol ship which acted as the Royal Navy's eyes and ears in the South Atlantic between the Falklands and the Argentine mainland. Captain Barker claimed in the BBC2 programme *War Stories* that the British am-



From artilleryman to sheep farming: Ten years on, Colonel Love feels a duty to speak out for the British embassy.

bassador in Buenos Aires ignored the warnings that Argentina was preparing a military adventure.

There were failings, Colonel Love admits, but he insists that the ambassador was as aware as anyone in the embassy that a military operation was threatened. But warnings sent by signal from the embassy were never taken seriously.

The most blatant example was the reaction to a special report Colonel Love sent on

March 2, 1982 which outlined the options facing the military junta in Argentina and the likely steps it would take to resolve the Falklands issue. This detailed, personal report was not read by the director of the defence intelligence staff at the Ministry of Defence until the middle of May, by which time the invasion was more than four weeks old and the British taskforce was on its way to the South Atlantic.

"I went to see him in his office at the ministry when I got back to London in May," Colonel Love says. "He told me my report had just landed on his desk. I couldn't believe it."

Colonel Love's official home in Buenos Aires was an ugly but grand house with marble floors and chandeliers. His wife, Robin, recalls that the floor was the colour of moradella. "If you dropped a slice of salami on the floor, you couldn't find it," she says. On the night of March 31, two days before the Argentines landed at Port Stanley, the Loves were entertaining General Luciano Menéndez, the Argentinian army chief of operations, and his wife. Menéndez was in what Mrs Love described as a "foxy" mood.

Colonel Love suspected that Argentina was about to launch an operation to seize the Falklands, although he had no evidence of mobilisation. Embassy staff had been shredding documents for a week and he had been secretly packing upstairs.

What he could not know was that his dinner guest was to be appointed governor of the Falklands after the invasion, once the British governor, Rex Hunt, had been sent home. War was in the air but at the dinner party, at which the deputy commander of Argentine army logistics was also present, everyone diplomatically avoided the subject.

Part of the defence attaché's job was to find out which of the Argentine generals were in town and which ones had gone missing. This would give an indication of who might be involved in the threatened Falklands adventure. Colonel Love says: "Menéndez was bubbly and effervescent at supper. The fact that he was spending time socialising either meant he was innocent of doing anything untoward or he was trying to fool me. I thought it was the latter."

The supper was the culmination of a series of events that had persuaded Colonel

Love to warn London of the danger facing the Falkland Islands. When he decided to make a trip to the Falklands to find out how vulnerable the islands were and to assess what Argentina might do, Rex Hunt was all for it, but the defence ministry in London said he could not go. The Falklands were outside his area of responsibility, he was told (he was defence attaché for Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) — unless he took his family with him and paid for the trip himself. Then it would look to the Buenos Aires junta as if he were taking a holiday.

He went and was never reimbursed. After a quick look around the islands seeing the marines based at Moody Brook and the police

'There is a great deal of finger-pointing going on. Most of it seems to be aimed at the embassy'

In Stanley he came to a simple conclusion. "The Falklands were a sitting duck," he says.

He sent his report to Rex Hunt, with copies to the Foreign Office and the defence ministry. The ambassador read his report and endorsed it. Under one heading, "Shots across the bows", Colonel Love suggested the Argentine navy might try to set up a naval research station on an outlying island or land marines by helicopter on an island for 24 hours and carry out low-level flying over Port Stanley.

However, under another heading, "Invasion", he warned that a "straight seizure" was an obvious alternative. Argentina was well practised in the art of *coup de main*, he said. He then outlined the likely course of Argentine military action: neutralising the detachment of 40 Royal Marines, capturing communications facilities, securing the airfield and jetty, grabbing the governor

and personal staff and replacing them with Argentine military.

Colonel Love referred to the importance of having accurate and timely intelligence, preferably by watching out for military activity at Cordoba, home of the airborne brigade, and at Rio Gallegos, the nearest airfield to the Falklands. "I never got a reply," he says. "There was absolute silence. I suspect at the Foreign Office there was a natural scepticism that anyone who was a soldier could make a deduction on a diplomatic issue."

His suspicions were borne out when he saw his report back in London. A Foreign Office official had scribbled on the top: "I suggest the ambassador has asked this to be sent. It says nothing that we don't already know."

Colonel Love followed up his March 2 report with another one on March 24, which warned of the risk of allowing HMS Endurance to be sent to South Georgia to remove the Argentine "scrap metal men" who had arrived without permission at the old whaling station site, the incident that was the precursor to the invasion on April 2. There was no reply to the second report either.

"There is a great deal of finger pointing going on at the moment, and most of it seems to be aimed at the embassy and in particular at Sir Anthony Williams," Colonel Love says. "But that's totally misguided and unjust. London knew what was going on as well as anyone. If anyone asks, 'did Colonel Love say that Galtieri was going to invade the Falklands on April 2', the answer is no. But I could never have been in a position to make a prediction like that."

The colonel's exit from Argentina after diplomatic relations were severed immediately after the invasion was carried out with due ceremony, and high farce. The Argentines insisted on sending representatives from the ministry of foreign affairs, army headquarters and the police to escort him and his wife to the Uruguayan border. "We knew the road very well but they hadn't a clue and in the end we had to show them the way," he recalls.

The colonel pats his border collie and prepares to go and deliver another lamb. Sheep farming is a lot simpler than dabbling in foreign affairs.

Techniques to keep you on the edge of the bed

Why Ernie Lord firmly believes we will all sleep better if we bounce around a lot before bedtime

To be bedded by Ernie Lord is a serious matter. He is chief bed-tester at Dunlopillo's Harrogate headquarters and, accompanying him round the bed department of Clover's furniture store in Leeds, it becomes clear that Mr Lord's technique is unlikely to be bettered by anything.

"You have to really test a bed. I mean you can even spend up to two hours just lying on a bed in a shop," Mr Lord suggests, leaping onto a Slumberland mattress. "Bringing blankets in might be a bit difficult but you must certainly try moving around as if you were in bed at home."

The nation's sleeping habits are in disarray, according to the National Bed Federation, and we only have a couple of weeks to rectify the situation. For March has been deemed National Bed Month, a time when we are supposed to turn back our

'A machine can tell you if a bed is hard. But can it tell you if it is comfy?'

divers in horror, and rush down to our nearest department store to try out some of Mr Lord's techniques.

A fresh bed should always be tested before you take it home, Mr Lord says, because "a machine can tell you whether a bed is hard or soft. But can it tell you whether it is comfy or not? You should be aware your bed is something for you to have a look at." He can check out a bed in a matter of seconds, and assess whether you will end up as one of the bunch who takes 59 million working days off a year due to back pain caused by bad beds.

"You lose half a pint of water a night in bed," Mr Lord says. "Add this up over 15 years: you could fill several bathtubs of sweat with the amount that's in your bed. Then there's the few thousand dust mites who live in the mattress."

Happy for Mr Lord, Dunlopillo's latex mattresses allow drainage of your night-half-pint; nor do they involve what he creepily terms "nesting areas", as they have no springs or flock stuffing.

We adopt more than 50 positions during the night, Mr Lord says, most of which he proceeds to demonstrate with enthusiasm on the shop floor. "First, you have to sit down really hard on the bed. Now, did you hear that crunch of springs?" he asks as the headboard goes crashing to the ground. "Next, try lying on the edge." Balancing precariously on the outer margin on the Slumberland, Mr Lord falls in a perfect arc onto the carpet. "There you are! Before you know it, you're on the floor." Well, you were on the edge of the bed, Mr Lord. "Partners often get themselves into this situation, and you must be able to balance on the edge of the bed. That's me off again!" he shouts as he falls heavily off a Sleepzeeze. "You need to test each area of the bed, to check it is all of the same firmness," Mr Lord instructs.

For any would-be bed purchaser, the professional way to do this is to stand at the foot of the bed, slowly bouncing on the balls of the feet. Lean forward, then spring back onto the bed, forming a kind of neo-shoulder stand. Repeat this action to cover all areas of the bed. "You must listen for creaky springs," Mr Lord says, waving his legs in the air with the precision of the experienced tester. He explains that this is an attempt to "develop out" any problem on the mattress.



Ernie Lord at work: "You have to really test a bed..."



"and move around a lot. Listen for creaky springs..."



"and try balancing on the edge. That's me off again!"



"Bringing blankets to a shop might be difficult..."



"but you must imagine this is the middle of the night"

"You need to imagine this is the middle of the night," he says, rather unconvincingly.

Mr Lord was born to be a bed tester. "I used to fall out of bed regularly as a boy," he says, revealing that he had recurring nightmares about troops of Highland warriors abed in hay lofts. All this nonsense about sleeping was soon drummed out of him, however, when he left school at 14 and became an apprentice at an undertakers. "Coffins and beds; they're still basically boxes," he says, with a hint of nostalgia. "Just different in terms of decoration."

The work of a bed tester is varied, if nothing else. On average, Mr Lord and his wife check out a new bed every three months. "We've had everything in our bedroom," he says cheerily. "We've been on singles, back to back, and even had a 6'6" x 6' double bed with both halves lifting electronically. We had our moments on that, I must say."

One imagines life with the Lord family as a never-ending

athletic sequence of charging upstairs and producing shoulder stands on the beds in the name of research. "I've gone past my children. I now test beds on my two grandsons; sometimes I even ring people up and ask them to test a bed for me."

However, the customers at the Leeds store seemed unaware of these high-jinks of bed research. "This is how I would test a bed," says Clover customer Ms Campbell, gingerly pressing one finger into a Dunlopillo mattress. "You need to get a pair of trousers on and throw yourself around a bit," Mr Lord says encouragingly. But Ms Campbell seems unconvinced. "British people just don't do this sort of thing, do they?"

Maybe not yet; but with the help of National Bed Month and department stores, we may soon all be springing onto the springs. "You need to lie and contemplate a new bed," Mr Lord shouts from a prostrate position aboard a Cumflux. "And don't forget to ask the shop for a pillow."

ROSIE MILLARD

Education is one of the key election issues
The politicians are wooing parents but...



WHICH WAY WILL TEACHERS VOTE?

Find out in this Friday's TES

TES

THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT
EVERY FRIDAY 75p

French fashion for real

Parisians are eschewing the dictates of the catwalk this season in a fashionable free-for-all, reports Liz Smith

Fashion's real victim is not just the over-enthusiastic shopper wearing a garish hotchpotch of prevailing fads from the beret on her cropped head to the latest platform soles, but the slave to any one designer's style.

Karl Lagerfeld, Yves Saint Laurent, Claude Montana, Christian Dior and the rest of the top names in the business may all be dictating their latest line at the collections in Paris this week, but it remains one of fashion's ironies that contemporary style can be best observed in the street. Designers can propose. Women must dispose. The only fashion trends that really matter are those that are seen to work on the stylish woman.

Reports from the catwalks this season — and last — announce a mystifying mish-mash of long skirts, short shorts, handkerchief-point hemlines that cover all options and the trouser suit with the masculine cut. Jungle patterns jostle with black and white op art prints. Psychedelic colours scream out against the ubiquitous backdrop of top-to-toe black. What is to be made of it?

The Parisienne has the answer. She loves the graphic chic of leopard spots, but just a touch — in gloves, bag, ankle boots, hat or scarf — is enough to perk up a simple sweater and skirt. She is collecting a wardrobe of classics, but instead of paying £10,000 or more for a designer reeder coat or the fashionable white shirt that is the basis of the crisp, tailored look coming into vogue, she can track one down in a man's shop or in one of the army surplus stores around Les Halles.

Leggings and bodysuits are worn by all ages — and, inevitably, all shapes. At best they provide a streamlined base for the next jacket which is the biggest investment of every Parisienne and instantly update all her existing jackets.

The young avant-garde go for a long, lean look, a trend they picked up from the anti-establishment's favourite designer, Martin Margiela. A Belgian who has a tendency to stage his shows on building sites, he has pioneered the new narrow shoulders and drooping neck coats reminiscent of the 1970s.

Ankle-skimming maxi skirts and skinny "poor boy" sweaters with ribbon chokers at the neck, droopy transparent dresses, cobwebby knits, platform shoes: all add up to the pervasive 1970s revival on the streets.

Jersey is the fashionable stuff for



long bias-cut skirts. Fringing adds to the hippy ragtag feel and young men with pig tails and beads, zooming into the place de la Concorde and the rue Mouffetard near the Sorbonne on motorbikes for *un petit noir*, sport tight striped trousers or *pattes d'elephants* — flares — with pig tails and beads.

Karl Lagerfeld's latest collection,

shown in Paris last Friday, demonstrated how the 1970s mood might filter through into more mainstream fashion. Beautifully cut, elongated jackets with a flatteringly narrow fit at the shoulders and long, skinny sleeves will no doubt become the silhouette for winter, worn with narrow stirrup trousers or a silky mid-calf skirt. Givenchy (and you cannot get

more chic or mainstream than that) has also shown longer jackets cut away in a curve at the front. For night-time, Lagerfeld has translated his liking for flattery, transparent 1970s veils into layers of long soft tunics and jackets in shadowy chiffon worn over narrow trousers.

Meanwhile the spring sunshine has coaxed women out of the

brightly coloured Michelin man *doudounnes* (padded blousons) that enveloped them all winter. Legs are back on show for those who still enjoy the acceptable short alternative to the new skirt. The remaining bright colours on the streets are in short trenchcoats and bright belted coats, worn with thick, colourful or matt black tights.

Among the many mix-and-match styles now stalking the streets of Paris are, from left: regulation leggings updating a black leather trenchcoat; a conservative shirt and tie adds the masculine touch to a traditional duffel coat; long, layered, Twiggy-style 1970s separates worn with a backpack that harks back to the 1980s; and, inset, a rocket-shaped bag and leopard-skin hat that typify the current vogue for amusing, graphic accessories.

Photographs by Justin Creed-Smith

Dress for stress

Buying a new outfit is known to have a tonic effect. You look good, so you feel good. Now the designer Azzedine Alaïa has come up with clothing that he claims not only raises your spirits but cures your ills.

Fashion's first therapeutic fabric is made from a new jersey called Relax. Claims that pulling on an Alaïa Relax catsuit might cure tension and headaches, dispensing with the need for Valium or aspirin, sound far-fetched. But, by protecting the body from the invisible electromagnetic waves given off by

A new fabric from Italy claims literally to make you feel good

household appliances, the fabric is said to reduce the ailments that these are believed to cause.

Relax contains a fine filament of nylon mixed with carbon, which has already been tested and used by NASA as a protective lining. The new fabric, developed by Ital-

ian textile company Lineapiù in conjunction with the international chemical company BASF, combines this with cotton, viscose or wool.

"We wanted something that not only looked good in fashion terms, but literally makes you feel good, and we knew carbon provided a shield from electromagnetic waves," says Giuliano Coppini, the president of Lineapiù.

Tests carried out in the Laboratory of Public Health in Ivrea, near Turin, showed that an ordinary fibre containing 6 per cent carbon helps protect those parts of the body covered. According to Professor Santi Tofani, the director of the laboratory, "The carbonated fabric is particularly effective at reducing the electro-magnetic field in the low range of radio frequencies that abound in the atmosphere."

Signor Coppini offered M Alaïa exclusive use of the yarn for a year. Only a few Alaïa knits in this summer's range are made from Relax — among them a long, ribbed-knit, hooded dress and a ruffled catsuit with flared trousers — but more will appear in the winter collection.

"It is not a miracle cloth, but I saw the demonstration in Turin and *ca fait du bon*," M Alaïa says. He has not been able to experience the benefits of the new yarn himself. "Can you imagine me in a little stretch dress?"

Daniela Ballarini, a psychologist and a member of the Italian Society of Biofeedback, carried out tests measuring body tension. A model wore an Alaïa anti-stress dress one day, and an ordinary sweater-dress the next. On the second day, her stress level was 50 per cent higher. The psycho-knit has arrived.

L.S.



Outfits in Relax from Azzedine Alaïa's new collection

A south London developer has a mission to make workers happy

Art and the Arctic

Roger Zogolovitch's theory is that if you give people a pleasant enough atmosphere in which to work, they will become more creative. They might also work harder.

Mr Zogolovitch is a commercial property developer who "wanted to create an acceptable and enjoyable place for people to be". So he went to Alaska.

Last summer he sent out posters to the media showing the Pole Star, oil fields, glaciers, a recipe for Baked Alaska and a slogan reading: "North to the Future; South to Success". The South to which they were invited was

Bermondsey, a south London suburb, and the home of the Alaska Works: a building which, according to Mr Zogolovitch, is owner, has been "developed for living and for creativity".

The Alaska Works is an art

GUY DRAYTON



Roger Zogolovitch: "It's about time we thought of the people first"

My single statement is that it's time we thought about the people first."

And so Alaska has not only beautiful art deco window frames and stair-wells. It also has 1930s desks, and a foyer filled with elegant chaise-longues designed by Tom Dixon. Redining on one, Mr Zogolovitch gazes out into the courtyard. "I am like a film producer. This is my production! Just look at this wonderful light! The air!" The stylish Mr Zogolovitch, whose second home in Poole is the converted interior of the Mauretania, does not expect local opposition for trying to create Soho in southeast London. He wants to breed creative talent on the doorstep.

"What I feel is appropriate is to sustain a local economy. This building used to employ 2,000 people. Maybe now it will employ up to a thousand again."

A fifth of Alaska, which opened last September, is now full. Mr Zogolovitch needs to woo the other 80 per cent of creative industries within a year if the project is to work. "Young guys come up to me and say how much they like it," he says, gazing up at the tower. "Then they tell their friends to come, because it is a groovy building. Which of course it is."

R. M.

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Expressions of interest, accompanied by a brief cv, should be sent to the Chairman of the Board of Management, Peter Pooley, at the School, Louvain-la-Neuve, 19, 3080 Tervuren, Belgium, with envelope clearly marked "Principal".

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Applications, together with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two referees, should be sent as soon as possible to The Head Master, Mill Hill School, The Ridgeway, Mill Hill, London NW7 1QS (tel. 081 959 1176), from whom further particulars may be obtained. Short-listed candidates will be interviewed between 21st and 24th April.

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For further details please contact the Headmaster's Secretary.

Interviews are likely to be held on the 14th, 15th or 16th April '92. Letters of application and C.V. with names and addresses of two referees to The Headmaster, Worksoop College, Worksoop, Notts S80 3AP.

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Further particulars may be obtained from the Senior Tutor, St. Hugh's College, Oxford OX2 6LE. Completed applications and references should reach the College by Monday 27th April 1992.

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EDUCATION TIMES

Politicians pick their vote-catchers

Education remains high on the agenda. John O'Leary looks at the parties' stance on the main issues

The party manifestos were never likely to spring many surprises on education policy. The politicians had been trailing their pet schemes for weeks beforehand.

The start of the campaign has confirmed, however, that education — particularly in state schools — is assuming an importance rarely seen in previous elections. Not only was it the first subject dealt with by the Conservatives, but all the party leaders have made schools and colleges regular parts of their travels.

Now that defence is no longer a big issue and consensus reigns over Europe, only the economy and health come before education in the voters' stated priorities. The parties can only hope they have judged correctly the concerns that have propelled the subject up the political agenda.

A Channel 4 poll of more than 4,000 parents and adult education students named an improvement in the three Rs, smaller classes and better discipline as prime topics for a new government. Resources topped the list for parents of primary school children. Two-thirds of interviewees, and 71 per cent of Conservative voters, regarded smaller classes as the single most important change needed. Parents of secondary school children rated teachers' pay a close second to class size. Both groups of parents were concerned about reading standards.

The poll offered little encouragement for the Conservatives. Only 14 per cent mentioned opting out, and only 5 per cent thought too much course work was allowed in GCSE courses. The same proportion felt there was too little course work.

Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, has admitted that the public expects improvements in standards with increased spending and are wary of structural change in the public services. The Conservatives must convince the voters that the radical reforms they have introduced need time to bear fruit, that opting

out will take off in a fourth term and the Parent's Charter will improve schools through market pressures.

Their opponents cannot assume they have won the argument. Labour must hope its attacks on selective education do not backfire because of nostalgia for grammar schools and fear of a monolithic comprehensive system.

The Liberal Democrats have gambled that education is of sufficient concern to the voters to warrant an extra 1p on income tax, even though the party is alone in arguing that standards are adequate.

As the campaign develops, the main themes are emerging as standards, resourcing and choice, each of which is an area of strength for at least one of the parties.

ALTHOUGH standards are traditional Conservative territory, Labour are taking advantage of 13 years in opposition to make the issue its own. Recent reports have confirmed a decline in reading standards in primary schools, and shown British performance in mathematics and science lagging behind that in South-East Asian countries.

Jack Straw, Labour's education spokesman, blames the government, and makes capital from the fact that only one cabinet minister, Tony Newton, sent his children to state secondary schools. Constant ministerial tinkering with the national curriculum has overburdened schools and destabilised teaching, he claims.

Labour are promising an education standards commission, with appointments confirmed by a Commons select committee, and run independently of government. Her Majesty's Inspectors would link with local services to monitor schools' performance. The commission would set targets for local authorities, which would decide funding.

In primary schools, Labour are promising a reading recovery scheme to target slow learners. In secondary schools,



Doing the rounds: the party leaders see the schools. Neil Kinnock meets pupils in Bristol, Paddy Ashdown makes a point in Kew, west London, and John Major visits Lincoln



there would be a reform of A-levels as part of a unified system of qualifications, linking the vocational with the academic. The party supports the proposal, rejected by Margaret Thatcher, for most sixth-formers to take five "learner" A-levels, rather than three.

The Conservative manifesto claims credit for "real improvements". The national curriculum, testing and tighter controls over GCSE and A-levels would all improve performance.

Mr Clarke said on radio last week that he could not be sure whether standards were falling, but the government's reforms would work, given time. John Major has blamed socialist dogma for damaging some schools, trying to place responsibility for poor standards on local authorities.

The party's "39 steps" summarised a programme already being implemented, rather than offering a new vision. Schemes such as the

Technology Schools Initiative and a more limited version of reading recovery have been launched in government. A-levels would remain unchanged, while new diplomas would be aimed at giving vocational and academic qualifications equal status.

Only the Liberal Democrats say state schools' standards are broadly satisfactory. They point to rising pass rates at GCSE and A-level as evidence that schools are adapting to the national curriculum.

The Liberal Democrats' distinctive policy on standards involves the dismantling of tests at seven, 11 and 14, which Labour supports. Matthew Taylor, their education spokesman, believes tests label seven-year-olds unfairly and encourage selection by schools at 11. He would rely on teacher assessment until the age of 14, when a system of course units, tested by course work and examinations, would begin. This would form

the basis of education up to 18, replacing GCSE and A-levels with achievement records.

THE Conservatives hope to make parental choice the prime issue. Opting out and the city technology college programme may not have taken off as they hoped, but the party sees the variety they represent as a popular alternative to Labour's all-comprehensive system.

New restrictions on local authority campaigning, and the promise that small primary schools will be allowed to form consortia to opt out, may make only a marginal difference to the numbers of grant-maintained schools. However, the Conservatives believe the 2,000 enquiries from schools considering opting out suggest the policy is more popular than the numbers already in the sector would indicate.

any education policy hinges on parental choice. They champion their assisted places scheme for low-income families to send children to independent schools, and leave open the possibility of more grammar schools where there is demand. Labour and the Liberal Democrats, however, say such variety allows schools to choose their pupils, instead of extending parental choice. Both are committed to abolishing selection at 11 and assisted places. Opted-out schools and city technology colleges would be returned to their local authorities or churches.

Mr Straw believes memories of secondary moderns will be stronger than any nostalgia for grammar schools. Labour has softened its line on independent schools, withdrawing any threat to their charitable status, and is promising legal protection to grant-maintained schools that fear discrimination on their return to local authorities. The party is

also promising public enquiries to settle disputes over school reorganisation plans.

FUNDING is the Liberal Democrats' chief hope for winning votes. The party's £2 billion scheme to revitalise education and training is tied to a rise in income tax. Mr Taylor says the plan has had a good reception during the campaign. "People give us credit for our honesty in telling them that nothing less will do, and this is what it will mean," he says.

The money for schools would go on an emergency capital programme to tackle a \$4 billion backlog in school building and repairs, to reduce maximum class sizes to 35 and later 30, and to provide nursery places for all children aged three and four whose parents want them. Labour promise an extra \$600 million in their first year

of office for a similar programme. Mr Straw has been careful to restrict his spending commitments, and will not detail the party's priorities until this week. He expects to fund part of Labour's programme from money earmarked for schemes that he intends to scrap, although the Conservatives insist that the benefits will be small because of continuing commitments.

The Conservatives have not entered the public spending auction, relying on their record in office. Their manifesto promises only to "encourage the provision of nursery places" and to reserve extra money to allow popular schools to expand. Mr Clarke has dismissed class size as a "relatively minor issue" because of the steady drop in pupil-teacher ratios during the past decade, and points to this year's increase in teachers' pay and a rising education budget as evidence of a willingness to spend what is necessary.

The flexible route



Technology in the independent sector: these Haileybury sixth-formers prepare for A-levels in the computer age

Whatever one thinks of a programme for pupils aged 16 to 19 based solely on A-level studies, there is no denying the quality, even the excellence, of the syllabuses and the performance in many individual subjects. A-level candidates' standards are probably not surpassed by 18-year-olds in any other country. As a preparation for many degree courses A-level has been most effective.

That does not mean the qualification must always remain the same. The announcement by the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) that A-level courses must have an end-of-course assessment accounting for at least 50 per cent of the marks showed an over-cautious approach.

The SEAC has to be assured of the integrity and reliability of course work before validating this type of assessment. Course work often works well, and in some areas it provides more effective assessment than examinations.

A-level has been effective so far, but variations are needed to match varying needs and skills

ulum". We wish to keep excellence in existing qualifications, while remedying deficiencies. Only 20 per cent are passing in two A-level subjects, and not only is it ill-advised to force more young people down this "high failure" route but questions should also be asked about its suitability for some students getting D and E grades. A range of courses to match all young people's needs and abilities is required.

Marginal improvements can be made to A-level courses so that they provide a more appropriate bridge between GCSE and higher education or employment and the challenge to the student is increased, but these will hardly increase the participation rate in full-time education.

The government's policy concentrates on vocational courses without creating more flexibility. When AS-level is unpopular or unsuitable, the only alternatives would be A-level or the vocational route. Some pupils, who are not yet ready for A-levels and may never be, wish to take their studies, in, say, history or physics or literature, beyond GCSE, rather than commit

themselves to health and care or leisure and tourism courses, which suit those who know what they want to do but are not for everybody. Many problems could be solved by more flexible unit-based courses, which have been accepted without reservation for vocational qualifications. The General National Vocational Qualifications will be based on 12 units, with additional units for developing core skills.

Some students gain from the step-by-step approach. If after two years of A-level work they have not completed all the units, they should be credited for those they have passed and be allowed to complete the rest later. There is no suggestion that all courses should be unit-based. For those preferring the traditional system appropriate courses should continue but the argument that modular courses must be of a lower standard than courses based solely on end-of-course assessment has to be refuted.

With a determination to preserve the rigour and coherence, a unit-based system can

be developed for the needs of a wide range of students aged 16 to 19, much as universities and colleges are doing for older students. Proper recognition must be given for every unit completed.

Equal attention must be given to the proper balance between breadth and depth in a student's programme and this is not just a problem for the A-level student. A GNVQ in health and care may provide no broader an education than A-levels in biology and geography. The means to provide greater "horizontal flexibility" is needed.

For some that may be best achieved, by something like their present three A-levels plus a complementary subject and general studies, covering core skills, along with good extra-curricular aesthetic and creative experience. For others the answer might be three or four units in up to six subjects. These might be traditional academic subjects or the new vocational qualifications but many may benefit from some vocational courses alongside academic subjects.

Let us concentrate on providing a coherent system of advanced education serving different needs but based on common principles.

VIVIAN ANTHONY
The author is the secretary of the Headmasters' Conference

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Candidates with interests in any area of law are invited to apply. The appointment will run from 1 October 1992 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Further particulars may be obtained by contacting the Senior Personnel Officer at the University (Telephone 0482 465807). Candidates seeking further information may contact the Dean of the Law School, Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski (Telephone 0482 466237) or the Research Director, Professor David Freestone (Telephone 0482 465705).

Closing date for applications 27th April 1992.

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Everything for the office ace

The secretary has become an increasingly powerful part of the company team. Beryl Dixon introduces a two page report on the annual show that appreciates her — or his — requirements

The first Secretary Show, held in London in 1987, attracted 6,000 secretaries and attendance doubled at the second, held the next year. Similar events have been held in Birmingham, Glasgow, New York, Paris and Sydney.

This year's London Secretary and Office Management Show opens at the Barbican Centre in the City, tomorrow, and the title reflects the changing role of today's secretary. The job of the true personal assistant, or PA, often known as office administrator or facilities manager, encompasses managing information, office administration and overseeing junior staff.

The three-day show is designed to help the secretary to provide an increasingly effective service to her, or his, employer. First, the show acts as an exhibition. There will be more than 120 companies, each with a good appreciation of the influence wielded by and the direct control of spending budgets accorded to secretaries.

Senior secretaries spend several billion pounds a year buying for their companies. At the show, they will be targeted by office equipment suppliers (including Smith Corona, Olympus, Canon UK, Siemens, Nixdorf, Mercury Paging and Driad Furniture), travel companies, hotel groups and conference venues.

The secretary or PA has a powerful position. Executives rarely say, "Book me on airline X or arrange accommodation at hotel Y". The PA makes that decision and is therefore courted as an influencer.

Second, the show will always provide a selection of training opportunities. Blenheim PEL, the organisers, in conjunction with the Industrial Society and the Institute of Qualified and Private Secretaries, have arranged seminars on professional and personal development.

Visitors will be able to choose from topics including: Decision

Making and Problem solving; Motivation and Delegation; Interpersonal Skills; Handling Difficult Situations at Work; Assertiveness; Building Personal Effectiveness; Stress Management; Self Management; Career Development; Purchasing Techniques; and Communication Skills.

New this year will be workshops on the middle day, covering negotiation, the concept of total quality management and BS5750, the system that enables a company to implement it. Claire Finch, event director says, "We see it as a natural extension of our commitment to present a wider range of training opportunities to a sector of the working population that is often

secretary is a competent purchasing professional. My seminar, while not attempting to turn delegates into purchasing managers overnight, will address issues such as assessing quality, negotiating prices, weighing up the arguments in favour of buying products with long or short-term life spans, taking out maintenance contracts and confidence to negotiate face to face."

Third, the show will also have demonstrations in less technical realms — on business fashion, image development and hairstyling. Fourth, it is not all work. Secretaries, many of whom will have taken a day's holiday to attend, are entitled to some perks. There will be freebies, competitions and samples.

If you have not yet bought a ticket, is it worth your while? Jean Arnold, a former senior secretary with the World Health Organisation in Geneva and currently executive assistant to the chief executive of the Construction Industry Training Board, thinks so.

"Secretaries, more than ever, are invaluable members of the management team. They should strive for continuous improvement and updating of their skills and image. I always find the show stimulating. It provides an ideal opportunity to look at current products and services. In addition the seminars which are low cost but high standard are always valuable."

Joy Scripps, PA with a large City accountancy firm, is a seasoned attendee with a strategy for maximum use of the event. "My plan is to get there early, before the majority of people arrive, and look at some of the exhibitions; take in two workshops before lunch, two in the afternoon; and use the lunch break and early evening to view the remaining exhibitions."

●The London Secretary Show: March 24 10am-6pm, March 25 10am-6pm, March 26 10am-5pm. For further information: Page 10



The finalists in the competition for European excellence: Judith Alicia Kozłowska, left; Deborah Bate, Sue Lang, Justine Barry, Alexandra Ainscough and Helen Allan. The winner will walk off with a £4,500 holiday for two people in Bali

Searching for the star of 1992

The Times is offering a luxury holiday to the winner of its competition to find the top European secretary of the year

Many new demands are being placed on secretaries as a result of the single European market. But are British secretaries being accorded the recognition that their increased responsibilities will bring?

Senior secretaries are held in high regard by the business community in most Continental countries, where secretarial work is a respected profession.

The senior or executive secretary is seen automatically as a member of the management team," says Valerie Greet, the chairman of the European Association of Professional Secretaries (EAPS). "This is particularly so in the Scandinavian countries, where secretaries invariably speak three or four languages and are usually graduates."

Even if they do not want to pack their bags and move to different countries, Britain's senior secretaries are taking on new responsibilities as a direct result of increased international competition. Good employers (defined by most PAs as those who fully appreciate their skills and know how to delegate)

image. She, unlike her often monolingual boss, is frequently the first point of contact with a foreign associate. She is the guardian of quality and must have an understanding of international business and culture, particularly important from this year onwards.

Surprisingly, many bosses have still not appreciated 1992's message. A survey carried out by EAPS last summer concluded with disappointment that many respondents to the survey were not required to speak

another language. This issue has been raised, together with the European dimension, in the "1992 Times European Professional Secretary of the Year" competition, offering a £4,500 holiday for two in Bali as first prize.

Sponsored by The Times, EAPS and the Industrial Society, entrants were invited (a) to write a 500-word

essay on how the introduction of the single market had affected both the UK and their own company; (b) to imagine that they were about to change places for six months with a secretary in another country, prepare a briefing document on British culture and practices for her, and prepare a list of differences they expected to find in their new environments; and (c) to write a detailed letter in a foreign language making arrangements for a business meeting, followed by a social event.

The competition drew entrants of such high quality that the judges, Valerie Greet, Brenda Hemmings, recruitment manager for News International, Helen Long of Blenheim PEL, organisers of the Show, Yvonne Bennion of the Industrial Society, and John Mole, author of *Mind Your Manners: Culture Clash in the European Single Market*, had a difficult task selecting the winner.

The written standard of language and presentation was extremely high," says Rhonda Smith of Blenheim. The shortlisted applicants were invited to London for technical tests and a panel interview. Six finalists have been selected and the name of the winner will be announced at the show tomorrow at noon.

The written standard of presentation was high

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Join the Vice Chairman of this successful International PLC as one of his Personal Assistants. He specialises in Corporate Finance and Investor Relations as well as having many other varied business interests.

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Skills: 100/60

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River View £16,000

Delightful bow in friendly City firm seeks a professional secretary to help him with a varied workload. Keen to involve you in all aspects of his job, he will ask you to take on varied administrative tasks. These include acting as the focal point for company benefit schemes, co-ordinating claim records and liaising with brokers. A flexible and outgoing nature together with excellent speech and presentation is essential. 55wpm typing. Age 27-35. Please contact Victoria Hazzington on 071 377 9919 for further details.

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We need a responsible and energetic person to join our office in the City.

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- Previous on-line information experience preferred

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Our client is a household name in the luxury goods market, and needs a confident person to help their PA team. Ideally, you will have experience in working with high class/luxury goods, and a Marketing/PK background. You must be immaculately presented, and if you have a major European language as well, this will put you at the front of the queue!

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Attributes (both positions): Speed, accuracy, attention to detail and immediate presentation of work; excellent telephone skills and ability to work well under pressure.

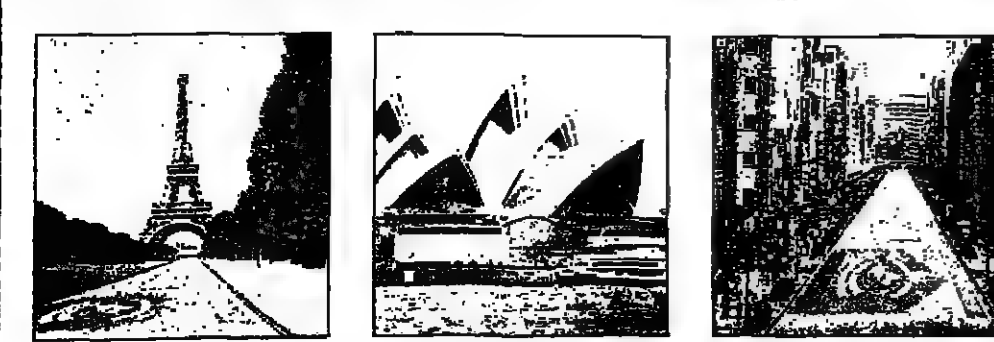
Hours 9.30-5.30. Friendly office near Green Park tube. CVs to MT Stoneham Langton & Posner 8 Bolton Street W1Y 8AU (or Fax: 071-629-4460)

No agencies please

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A challenging position working for the Director of this Pharmaceutical company, who is responsible for International Affairs. The successful candidate will be an efficient Senior shorthand Secretary who has good organizing skills and can run the office in the Director's absence. Requirements are a minimum 'A' level education, some medical/science knowledge & good acc. W/P skills. French or German useful. Age 25-45.

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BBC 2

6.45 **Open University: Art - A Little Gothic Castle** (8656678). Ends at 7.10

8.00 **Breakfast News** (9222878) 8.15 **Northern Arts** (9205101)

8.30 **Boating Butler**. Tony Butler takes a look at life along the banks of the rivers and canals of the Midlands (r) (81149)

9.00 **Daytime on 2**. Educational programmes

2.00 **News and weather** (7466410) followed by **Storyline** (r) (5932825) 2.15 **Small & Beautiful** (753271). **Northern Ireland: Our Roving Reporter** 2.45 1954 Hary and the Hendersons 2.45 **The Collectors**. A butterfly collecting expedition in the Scottish countryside (r) (1483323)

3.00 **News and weather** (8152588) followed by **Village Praise**. Pam Rhodes visits Grassington in the Yorkshire Dales (r). (Ceefax) (s) (8781588) 3.40 **Glynis Christian's Serendipity**. Glynis Christian visits a Sri Lankan spice garden (r) (4142033) 3.50 **News**, regional news and weather (4142277)

4.00 **The Bantyre Experience**. A report on Bantyre House prison in Kent where the inmates are allowed out to mix, unsupervised, with the local community (r) (s) (182)

4.30 **Grand Prix**. Highlights of yesterday's grand prix in Mexico City (r) (86052) 5.30 **Film 92** with Barry Norman (r) (s) (588)

6.00 **The Adams Family** (b/w). Vintage comedy series about a devious American household. (Ceefax) (330149)

6.25 **GHF** It begins with **The Fresh Prince of Bel Air**. Comedy series about a streetwise inner city youth sent to live with affluent west coast relations (488678)



In the hot seat: Red Dwarf's Craig Charles, right (6.50pm)

6.50 **Open to Question**. Craig Charles, star of **Red Dwarf**, answers questions from a studio audience of young people. Last in the series (911507)

7.30 **Young Musician of the Year Mastersclass**. Four young percussionists are instructed by James Wood, an expert in the field as well as a composer, conductor and founder director of the New London Chamber Choir (s) (389897)

8.10 **Horizon: Time of Darkness**.
● **CHOICE**: John Lynch's film opens with shots of holidaymakers at the seaside and a warning about new dangers of skin cancer and catastrophe from ultra-violet radiation. It is, of course, talking about the depletion of the ozone layer by CFC pollutants. But that is not the whole story, or even the main one. The thrust of the film, first shown last year and now updated, is the connection between climate and volcanic eruptions. If CFCs are the immediate cause of ozone destruction, then volcanoes are often the trigger. To prove the argument Lynch goes back 3,000 years to the clearance of the Scottish Highlands, via peat bogs in Ireland and shows how evidence of climate can be deduced from the rings of trees. It is a fascinating detective story, which stays well within the grasp of the scientifically illiterate (r). (Ceefax) (431507)

9.00 **The Mary Whitehouse Experience**. Series of irreverent comedy sketches (2186)

9.30 **The Old Devils**. Episode two of Andrew Davies's three-part adaptation of the Kingsley Amis novel about a bunch of drinking pals in Wales. Starring John Stride, James Groun, Ray Smith and Bernard Hepton. (Ceefax) (e) (864038)

10.20 **Obsessions**. Jill Tvede is the second of seven British writers who confront their obsessions in a series of impressionistic films. She tells of a bleeding knight, cave dwellers and a house that drives someone to murder. (Ceefax) (e) (757052)

10.30 **Newsnight** with Francine Stock (804941)

11.25 **The Late Show**. Arts and media magazine (s) (866894)

11.55 **Weather** (8615540)


12.00 **Open University: Music: Cadences** (7929508). Ends at 12.30am

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCode

The numbers now appearing next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes. These numbers allow you to instantly programme your video recorder with a VideoPlus+ handset. VideoPlus+ can be used with most videos. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. For more details call VideoPlus+ on 0800 123 4567 or visit us at www.videoplus.com. Also e-mail us at write@videoplus.com, VTM Ltd, 77 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 6GA. (VideoPlus+®, Pluscode®) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd.

CHANNEL 4


9.00 **TV-am** (3190225)
9.25 **Locals Ladders** (9728491) 9.55 **Thames News** (8690878)
10.00 **The Time... The Place...** John Stapleton chairs a topical discussion (1614925)
10.40 **This Morning** Magazine series (4901472)
12.10 **Rosie and Jim** Children's puppet series (9804830)
12.30 **ITN Lunchtime News** with Nicholas Owen and Sonia Russell (Oracle) Weather (7283472) 1.10 **Thames News** (77653675)
1.20 **Home and Away** (Oracle) (8322481) 1.50 **A Country Practice** (90486491)
2.20 **Thames help** (45591507) 2.50 **Families** Soap linking Australians with the north of England (865449)
3.15 **News headlines** (319295) 3.20 **Thames News headlines** (3198676) 3.25 **The Young Doctors** Medical drama (8563830)
3.55 **Cartoon**-featuring Speedy Gonzales (6104526) 4.00 **Wall of the Banishes** Fantasy drama starring Michael Angeli and Susan Basha. (Oracle) (6181675) 4.25 **Chip 'n' Dale - Rescue Rangers** Cartoon (6450438) 4.50 **Art Attack** presented by Neil Buchanan (5496830)
5.10 **Blockbusters** Quiz game for teenagers (8250120)
5.40 **Early Evening News** with John Suchet. (Oracle) Weather (787385)
5.55 **Thames Help** A look at animal welfare (7) (239192)
6.00 **Home and Away** (Oracle) (255)
6.30 **Thames News** (Oracle) (507)
7.00 **Magic Comedy Strip** A new series of comedy and music in which Rudy Coby, Jeff Hobson and David Williamson are joined by illustrators the Pendragons (8) (7120)
7.30 **Coronation Street** (Oracle) (8) (491)
8.00 **Talks Your Pick** The "yes-no" game show hosted by Des O'Connor (8) (318)
8.30 **World in Action** **The Lost Vote of Martin Thow** A visit to north London's marginal Hampstead and Highgate constituency to meet some of the country's thousands of people who have sacrificed their vote. They told us they'd not pay their poll tax and did not register to vote to avoid being caught. Plus a report from South Africa on the thousands of British residents who are eligible for a postal vote even though some have been abroad for two decades (2675)



Protected by the law: music student Rachel Weisz (9.00pm)

9.00 **The Advocates**
● **CHOICE:** The film *House Calls* was pulled from the schedules last week because its star, Glenda Jackson, is standing in the general election. Luckily there was no similar action over *The Advocates* thanks to its writer, John Cooper, is also a Labour candidate. Labour supporters may have mixed feelings about their man getting to Westminster, if this means less time for penning such watchable thrillers. The initial response to *The Advocates* was how this tale of murder and much else peaked at one. Edinburgh law firm could manage to juggle so many plot lines and not send one or two crashing along the way. It gives nothing away to say that in tonight's convoluted episode Cooper manages the trick brilliantly. Short, pithy scenes carrying the main narrative strands are deftly intercut to sustain tension to the last frame. (Oracle) (5472)
10.00 **News at Ten** with Julia Semelivie and Trevor McDonald. (Oracle) Weather (73120) 10.30 **Thames News** (830033)
10.40 **Film:** *The Stud* (1978) starring Joan Collins and Oliver Tobias. Twisted, dated tale of sex, deicos and gambling in supposedly swinging London, taken from the novel by Jackie Collins. Directed by Quentin Mates (21307507)
12.30 **Quantum Leap** Extras. Golf highlights from the Portuguese open (8790)
1.30 **Film:** *Calico Road* (1950, b/w) starring Eric Portman and Laurence Harvey. Routine police drama, transported to Egypt, where a detective lays a trap to capture a gang of drug smugglers. Directed by David MacDonald (88705)
1.50 **Swamp the Whirlwind**. Costume drama set in 19th century Cape Town (8) (4483)
4.30 **News** (8) (4483)
4.50 **The 4 of Us** and Robyn Hitchcock and the Egyptians in concert (8) (77985)
5.30 **ITN Morning News** with Tim Nelson (25521). Ends at 6.00

8.00 Channel 4 Daily (319897)
9.25 Schools (5458507)
12.00 Night to Reply. Claire Rayner defends herself against criticism for appearing in a sanitary protection advert (r). (Teletext) (s) (70033)
12.30 Business Daily. Susanah Simons with news and analysis from the world's money markets (59565)
1.00 Sesame Street. Entertaining early learning series. The guest is *The Cosby Show*'s Raven Symone (27436)
2.00 Film: I Believe in You (1962, b/w) starring Celia Johnson and Cecil Parker. Gump Ewing drama about a retired colonial civil servant working with the probation service who becomes involved with a young couple (Joan Collins and Harry Fowler) trying to get back to the straight and narrow. Directed by Basil Dearden (354833)
3.45 Pete Smith Specialities. A comedy short examining women's tactics in pursuing man (6061588)
4.00 Flowering Passions. Gardening series presented by Anna Pavord. This afternoon she meets Suffolk gardener Peggy Cole and takes to Londoner Harvey Grottmann about his colourful use of annuals (r) (120)
4.30 Countdown. Another round of the words and numbers game, presented by Richard Whiteley. He is joined this week by actress Jan Harvey (304)
5.00 The Late Late Show. Dublin's music and chat show hosted by Gay Byrne (4033)
6.00 The Cosby Show. American domestic comedy series (r). (Teletext) (637)
6.30 Tonight with Jonathan Ross. The guests include American comedian Eddie Irl (s) (149)
7.00 Channel 4 News. (Teletext) Weather (170323)
7.50 Voters. Three voters in a north London hairdressers discuss what they think are important general election issues (361217)
8.00 Brookside. Soap set in suburban Merseyside. (Teletext) (s) (4410)
8.30 Evening Shade. Farley comedy set in small-town America starring Burt Reynolds as a former footballing star who returns to coach the local school team. With Marilu Henner (3197)



Pushed to the limit: Parachute Regiment hopefuls (9.00pm)

9.00 Cutting Edge: P Company.
● CHOICE: For the first time the television cameras are allowed to cover the four-week selection course for aspiring members of the Parachute Regiment. It has the reputation of being the toughest course in the British army and nothing in the film contradicts this. Amid much bullying, cajoling and bad language, the 39 hopefuls are reduced to physical and psychological jelly as they engage in such pursuits as hill-climbing, long-running, speed marching and scaling high bridges. The main fascination for the armchair spectator, apart from the massive pleasure of watching other people pushed to the limit, is trying to predict how many of the 39 will stay the course. The wider question concerns the purposes to which such brutally acquired macho skills might be applied. But that is something for another film (3014)
10.00 Northern Exposure. Ecosocialist American comedy by the makers of *SI Elsewhere* about a young New York doctor who is transferred to a remote village in Alaska (238491)
10.55 Disabling World: A Is for Autism. An explanation in words, drawings, music and animation of the condition. (Teletext) (831782)
11.10 Disabling World: A Different Hand. A musical black comedy about parents who are determined to make their daughter who was born without hands "acceptable". (Teletext) (s) (481781)
11.55 Disabling World: The Last News and Views on the General election campaign, presented by Sharna McDonald (454236)
1.55am Tonight with Jonathan Ross (r) (6307502). Ends at 2.25

SKY NEWS

SKY ONE

• **Via the Astra and Mariposani satellites**
12.00 The Koi Show (9073449) 8.40
Mimi Pepperpot (0000343) 8.55 Playabout
(823949) 9.10 Carrots (7798307) 9.30 The
Mystery of the Mole (823949) 9.45
Muscle (823949) 10.30 The Young Doctors
(10675) 11.00 The Bold and the Beautiful
(84491) 11.30 The Young and the Restless
(823949) 11.55 The Bold and the Beautiful
(84491) 12.30 Another World (825476) 2.30 Santa
Barbara (5044656) 3.25 A Wife of the West
(807876) 3.16 The Brady Bunch (387481)
(823949) 3.30 The Brady Bunch (387481)
3.55 The Brady Bunch (387481) 4.30
Newscast (2303) 5.30 Switched
(8675) 6.00 Facts of Life (1648) 6.30 Cande
Carson (4168) 7.00 Love at First Sight
(823949) 7.30 The 10th Anniversary Special
Second of a three-part mini series (77472)
10.00 Studs (79379) 10.30 Love at First
Sight (11354) 11.00 Love at First Sight
11.30 Love at First Sight (11354) 1.00pm
Pages from Skyline

News on the hour
6.00m Sunrise (803955) 8.30 The Con-
versation (803955) 9.00 News, Int Election
Program (8785) 11.30 Moving Average
(85762) 12.00pm Good Morning America
(40875) 8.00 Good Morning America (78132)
8.30 News, Int Election Program (8785) 9.00
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A woman, on average, lives longer than a man. So she is more likely to face the horrors of intestacy – the legal term for being left in a mess because her husband didn't make a will.

Many men assume that all they own will automatically go to their wives. This isn't so.

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10.15 Cannon for Caroline (1894)

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RADIO 5

dition 9.00 **Schools:** Topic Resources 5-7, 9.15 **Sails** 11:15; 9.35 **Poetry** Comm, 9.46 **Let's**
 move, 10.05 **Enrollee!** 10.25 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10.40 **Johnnie Walker** with **The AM Alternative**
 11.20pm **The Day Before Yesterday:** Anne Hathington looks at the Budget and at the electric
 guitar 1.00 **News Update:** 1.15, 2, 3, 4, 5 (1.30 **BBS Worldwide**, Simon and the Squares
 3.00 **World Service: World Report**; 2.45 **Personal View**; 3.05 **Outlook**; 3.30 **Blue Blood** 4.05
Programs in Action 4.35 **Five Alive** 7.15 **Ballet Shoes:** First of a ten-part adaptation of Noel
 Coward's novel, *Red*, read by **Hamer Walker** 7.30 **Mynding** and **The Choice of Wiscow:** Third of a
 ten-part serial by **Sean Mollart** 8.00 **Euroomic** 8.45 **Fanshow** on **Five** 9.30 **At the Sign of the**
cross and Rocket, by **Jack Mark** 10.10 **The Mix**, **in** 11.00 **News** 12.00 12.10am **News:** Sport

WORLD SERVICE

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ITV VARIATIONS

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RADIO 3

8.55am Weather; News: Headlines

7.00 Morning Concert: Two Concerts
(Christoschola of the Vienna Hofburgkapelle); Bach (English Suite No 2 in A minor, 1717-18); 800 News

7.35 Morning Concert (cont):
Dvorak (Slavonic Dance in B flat minor, 72 No 5); Janáček (Violin Sonata); Suk (new recording for Strings)

8.30 News

8.35 Composers of the Week: Robin Holloway and Egon Krauss. Holloway (Sonatas from Schwartz); Krauss (under Oliver Krauss); Krauss (Where the Wild Things Are; London: Strifebrinkers under Egon Krauss); Krauss (composer, with Rosemary Harpy, soprano, as Max; Mary

4.30 Mendelssohn: (Quartet No 2 in A minor, Op 13; Vermeer Quartet)

4.55 Pierre Chouhary plays: Vienna (Symphony No 2 in E minor, Op 20) on the organ of Notre-Dame in Paris

5.30 Monday, for Strings, with Brian Kay 7.00 News

7.05 Third Ear

CHOICE: The cosy thrills of a new age establishes the discussion between Frank Rich, chief drama critic of the *New York Times*, and Benedict Nightingale of the *London Times*, is a relaxed meeting of mutually-attuned minds. Highly influential minds, too, even if you discount – as Rich does – the tabloid mythology that he has the power of a Broadway

King, mezzo, as Mama/Tzipi
Female Wild Thing)

(Symphony No 5 in D: English Concert under Trevor Pinnock; Stanford (Sarasate, No 18): Capetown; Mozart (Rondo in A minor, K 511: Mitsuko Uchida, piano); Haydn (String Quartet in F, Op 15 No 2: Tessa Lattle); Schmidt: Variations on a Hussar's Song: New Philharmonia Orchestra under Hans Sauer)

1.25 BBC 50 under Andrew Davis, with Hugh Kingsbottom (alto), performs Stravinsky (Scherzo fantastique); Prokofiev (Sinfonia concertata, Op 125); Massengale, orch Royal Opera from an Exhibition

1.00 News

1.05 BBC Lunchtime Concert
Howard Shelley, piano;
London Wind: Philippe
Rieux, flauto; Robert Hulse
orch: Michael Collins, clarinet;
Robin O'Neill, bassoon;
Richard Watkins, horn,
perform Hindemith (Kleine Kammermusik, Op 24 No 2);
Lynn Harcourt (in Places for
Quintet); Beethoven (Quintet in
E flat for piano and wind, Op
16 No 2) Third Overture (P)

2.25 La Marseillaise à l'Passerole:
The Windy Boys
under Vera Bolton perform
Vivaldi's opera. With Lorna
Anderson, soprano, as Eurlis;
Susan Bickley, soprano, as
Nico; and Barry Banks, tenor,
as Alcindo (P)

would not be a Broadway hit," he says, and George Bush would not still be in the White House.

7.30 Britten's War Requiem: BBC Welsh Chorus; London :
Philharmonic Choir;
Windsor City Cathedral Choir;
BBC Welsh Symphony
Orchestra under Richard
Hickox. With Faye Robinson,
soprano, Marilyn Hill, tenor,
Bryn Terfel, bass-baritone (P)

8.05 London
D.J. Taylor. Shelley Thompson
narrates the adventures of a
single woman.

9.25 Michael Radford's Capricorn:
Jean-François Ruel (Trio-Sonata
in E minor for violin and bass
viola; Les Capricornes de la
Danse; Cambridge Music -
Andrew Martin, violin; Robert
Egerton, recorder; Mark Lay,
bass-violi; Richard Egger,
harpsichord)

10.00 All-Hands-on-Motter: A
recording of a concert given
by the American trio of Geri
Allen, piano, Chuck Haney,
bass, and Paul Motter, drums
at the Queen Elizabeth Hall

11.30 News

11.35-12.35pm Composers of the
World: Borodin (Tumultuosa
Suite to my Song; Overture,
Prince Igor; Symphony No 1)
(P)

1.00-2.05 Night School (except in
Scottish, see Radio 5 at 10pm)

2.30-3.10 Night School Extra

COMPILED BY PETER DEAR AND RUFIE FIGUERA
TV CHECK: PETER WATKIN/RADIO CHECK: PETER DAVALLE

Looking Back with Kenneth Mackay (11:00-11:30) 6.00 TSW Today (255) 8.30-9.00

WYOMING
 1964-65 The Last Week (15265) 1.55
 1965-66 The Last Week (15265) 1.55
 Time (70252) 3.15 America's Top Ten
 (70731) 3.45 About Britain (70522) 4.10
 (70732) 4.15
 (70733) 4.15-4.30
 (70734) (SAC1718)

TVTS
 As London except 2.30m-5.00m (SAC1718)
 As Coast People (4691507) 3.25-3.35
 News (70735) 3.40-3.50
 As Coast People (4691507) 3.55-4.05
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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

RADIO 4

<p>(a) Stereo on FM</p> <p>5.55am Shipping Forecast 8.00 News Briefing, incl 6.03 Weather 8.10 Farming Today 8.15 News 8.20 Today, incl 6.30, 7.00, 7.30, 8.00, 8.30 News 8.45 Today News 8.55, 9.05 Weather 7.25, 8.25 Sports News 7.45 Thought for the Day 8.45 Party Election Result 8.50 Weather 9.05</p> <p>9.00 News Election Calls: 071-799 5000. Listeners are asked to call Jean Lambert on the Green party line.</p> <p>10.00 10.30am News: The House (FM only): Second of a six-part programme by Christopher Lee. With Julian Glover (c)</p> <p>10.00 Daily Service (LW only): from the Parish Church of St Andrew and St George in Edinburgh</p> <p>10.15 The Bible: Jeremiah Alan Baker reads the first episode</p> <p>10.20 12.00 Campaign Report (LW only)</p> <p>10.30 Women's Hour: Janet Murray talks to Marilyn Francis, philosopher and novelist, incl 11.00 News</p> <p>11.30 Music: Best Lines: 071-580 4411, with Vincent Goddard. Lines open from 10am</p> <p>12.00 News: You and Yours, with John Peel</p> <p>12.25pm Courtpoint: Ned Sherrin hosts the final heat in the musical quiz (c) 12.45 Weather</p> <p>1.00 The World at One (LW only from 1.40)</p> <p>1.40 The Archers (FM only) (c)</p> <p>2.00 2.45 Campaign Report (LW only)</p> <p>2.00 News: The Witch is Dead: Conrad Dozier's Inspector Morse crime series. With John Straincel and Robert Ginty (c) (c)</p> <p>3.30 Conversation Piece: Sue Gregor talks to Timothy Chapman, director of the National Galleries of Scotland London (c)</p> <p>4.05 News Kaleidoscope meets Brian Ratcliffe, composer of the Royal Ballet's 'The Judas Tree' at artists' sketches at the Museum Gallery; reviews the book 'Telling Stories and Selling Encounters' and singles listeners to match the conductor to the music (a)</p>	<p>4.45 Short Story: A Gentleman's Agreement, by Elizabeth Jolley. Read by Susan Curnow</p> <p>5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping Forecast 8.00 News</p> <p>6.00 Six O'Clock News</p> <p>6.30 The News Quiz: Barry Took quizzez learn captain Richard Attenborough and Alan Coren and guests (c) (c)</p> <p>7.00 News 7.05 The Archers 7.20 The Food Programme (FM only), with David Good</p> <p>7.50 8.00 Treasure Islands (FM only): Libby Purves and Gordon Ashley look at four of the newest overseas territories (c)</p> <p>7.20 Woman's Hour (LW only) (c)</p> <p>8.00 8.45 Campaign Report (LW only)</p> <p>8.00 The Monday Play: Darling Pais (LW only) (a) A word of warning if you are easily upset. The last ten minutes or so of Shelagh Stephenson's play is very disturbing, so, if opponents of capital punishment need it more solidly, here it is. The last attempt, grim and desperate, to get us to imagine what the defence counsel at the 1922 Dunbar-Brewsters trial asked the jury to imagine the atmosphere of the life of Mrs Thompson, sentenced, by her own father, Freddy Bewsters, to hang for the murder of her husband. Rachel Joyce makes her radio debut as Edith Thompson. A new episode and an exciting new talent (a)</p> <p>8.45 Kaleidoscope (c) (c)</p> <p>9.30 The Financial World Tonight 9.55 10.55 News</p> <p>10.00 News: The World Tonight (c)</p> <p>10.45 A Book at Bedtime: Blazing Pirates - Fiftiesam, Jotsum and Mins the first of the readings by Brian Wilson chronicling his kayak journey around the coast of Scotland under the name of Our Kark: 10.55 News</p> <p>11.00 The Book of the Week with Kenneth Horne, Kenneth Williams, Hugh Padlock, Betty Marsden, Bill Pertwee and the Homes Four (c)</p> <p>11.30 Election Platform 12.00 12.45am News, incl 12.27 Weather 12.23 Shipping Forecast 12.43 World Service (LW only)</p>
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FREQUENCY GUIDE: Radio 1: 105.94/120.85/109.6/127.77/FM 94.9/94.9. Radio 2: 94.98/90.2. Radio 3: 90.4/92.4. Radio 4: 155.4/155.4/155.4/155.4. Radio 5: 69.3/69.3/43.8/60.3/60.3/33.0. Local: FM 119.2/124.7/25.1. FM 87.3. Capital: 95.8/95.8/154m. FM 95.8. 90.4: 145.9/90.2/20.6m. FM 115.4/25.1/25.1. World Service: MW 95.8/95.8/154m.

COMPILED BY PETER DEAR AND FILIPE FIGUEIRA
TV CHOICE PETER WAYMARK/RADIO CHOICE PETER DAVALLE

Radio 5: 630k-hz/430m; 808k-hz/330m. LBC: 1152k-hz/261m; FM 97.3. Capital: 1548k-hz/194m; FM 95.8. GLP: 1458k-hz/208m; FM 94.9. World Service: MW 648k-hz/463m